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THE  
CORRESPONDENCE  
OF  
RICHARDSON.

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CORRESPONDENCE

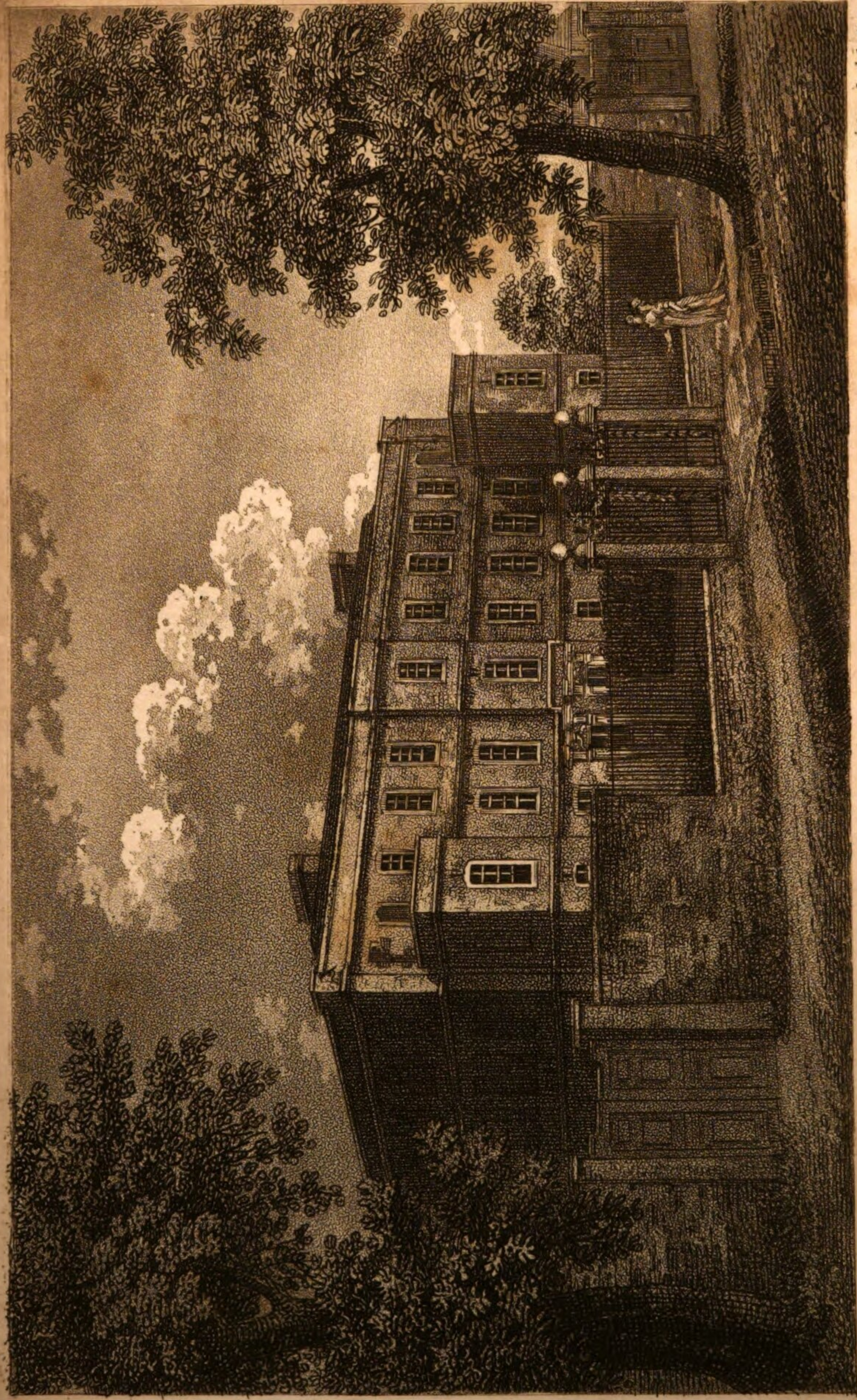
OF

RICHARDSON









*Richardson's House at North End, Hammermith.*

*Printed by Richard Phillips at St Pauls Church Yard.*

*T. Rickards del. et sc.*



THE  
CORRESPONDENCE  
OF  
SAMUEL RICHARDSON,  
AUTHOR OF  
PAMELA, CLARISSA, AND SIR CHARLES GRANDISON,  
SELECTED FROM THE  
*ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS,*  
BEQUEATHED BY HIM TO HIS FAMILY.

To which are prefixed  
A BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT  
OF THAT AUTHOR,

AND  
OBSERVATIONS ON HIS WRITINGS,  
BY ANNA LÆTITIA BARBAULD.

---

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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VOL. IV.

---

LONDON: PRINTED FOR RICHARD PIHLLIPS, No. 71,  
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD,

1804.

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By T. Gillet, Crown-court, Fleet-street.







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CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

MR. RICHARDSON,

AND

DR. AND MRS. DELANY, MRS. DONNELLAN,

AND

MRS. DEWES.

---

TO MR RICHARDSON.

*Nov. 8th, 1739.*

DEAR SIR,

THE account you give of polygamy is, perhaps, but a necessary abatement to the vanity of authors, who are too apt to imagine that they have a right to be rated according to the merit of their labour, and the goodness of their intentions. It is, however, their consolation (such as it is) that the judgment of the public seldom works any change in their own, especially if their own have the



sanction of the few better judges; and it is but too natural to deem those so who concur in opinion with them.

I acknowledge, freely, that every man that lays out his money, is a better judge than I am, how it should be laid out. However, if that work be not thought worth buying, it may be thought worth accepting; especially if it come recommended by the advantage of a fair outside: and therefore I desire you may send one of them neatly bound, lettered, and gilded on the back, to every one to whom the Life of David was sent; and one to every college in each university; where, if they are to die, they may be buried with many better works, and from whence (if they are found worthy to live) they may one day revive to more advantage.

I cannot conclude this letter, without assuring you, that I have a very lively sense of your friendship to me, and a sincere desire of its continuance to death.

When you can, properly and conveniently,



ently, I desire you will favour me with a sincere account of the reception *David* meets with, and the probable encouragement or discouragement for the continuance of the work; a considerable part of which is ready for the press, as I hope the whole will be before Christmas.

I am, dear Sir,  
your faithful friend and servant,

PAT. DELANY.

---

TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Welsbourn, July 8th, 1750.*

DEAR SIR,

I SHOULD sooner have acknowledged the favour of your letter, but company in the house prevented me; an unusual hurry; for, thank God, our life is very quiet and retired, which best suits my disposition, not hav-



ing talents to shine in the great world. I always wished to pass thro' life unknown and unobserved; but when a person so good as the excellent author of *Clarissa* deigns to take notice of me, I think myself most happy, because I know he will excuse my defects, and encourage my desire of improvement. Perhaps the word improvement may seem improperly applied to a person of my age; but tho' music, dancing, and other polite arts, can only be attained while young, wisdom and goodness may be learned as long as we live, tho' it should be seventy years. I am sure, while you, good Sir, continue to write, all that can or will read, must improve; and therefore I hope there will be no bar to the work your friends are so desirous to see begun and compleated. Indeed, if it hurts your health, I have too much regard to the merit and happiness of good Mrs. Richardson and her sweet family, to wish you to proceed. Entirely unable am I to contribute: much greater abilities could not give you the assistance  
your



your excess of humility makes you demand. My sister and I read those letters you favoured her with, together, with great pleasure, and hope to see more of them. I am sure my *own* Mrs. Delany is very glad her thoughts give you satisfaction; they proceed from a true, sensible, tender, and religious heart. Oh, Sir, you do not know half the perfections of Mrs. Delany. Had I the happiness of being near enough to converse with you (and what a happiness would that be to me) I could make you acquainted, by her letters, with a thousand sentiments that would charm you. You would see by them (and by many incidents of her life which I could relate to you) a just gradation of virtues from infancy to her present age, which is as highly advanced towards immortality as this life will permit. Indeed she is often above humanity in her disinterestedness, and ardent desire of doing good and generous actions: she is quite Clarissa in relieving the distressed, and giving due praise to every mortal.



Excuse my saying so much, but I cannot think or speak of her without inexpressible ardour and delight.

As it is not in my power to say any thing worth your notice, I cannot expect the pleasure of your correspondence, as you have so many things of consequence to take up your time ; but if you ever have a leisure moment, to inform me, that you and all you love are well, it will be an extreme pleasure to me.

Your faithful and obliged

humble servant,

A. DEWES.

*P. S.* I end where I should have begun, which is, to beg the favour of you to oblige with your countenance and conversation the young gentleman who brings you this ; his name is Chapone ; a remarkably sober, good young man ; his father a very worthy clergyman ; his mother (who has been a particular friend to me and my sister from our childhood) and has most uncommon sense  
and



and improved understanding, thinks, with great justice, that your good judgment and friendly advice (which I am sure you will not refuse) must be a great advantage to her son, now he is just advancing upon the most dangerous stage of life.

---

TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Epsom, July 14th, 1750.*

SIR,

BEFORE I left London, when I received your note, and obliging present to Miss Sutton and me, we were in the hurry of removing, and I was not able either to thank or reproach you, both which I thought you deserved ; but now that country leisure permits me to write, I must do both, and assure you, first, that I have received infinite pleasure, and something better, from the collection of sublime sentences which you have so



ably made the divine Clarissa apply to in her deepest distresses.

I am also much obliged to you for the other little book, which seems composed with a pious spirit; but I own calling them *Psalms* disappointed me. I never met with any composition, either as paraphrase or imitation of those divine compositions, that I liked; they come so infinitely short of the true sublime, that I should rather chuse a mere human composition in any other shape.

I must also thank you for the canons of Mr. Warburton's antagonist, which I read before I left London, but forgot to return you. They made me laugh: a great merit to us splenetic folks! for I will not allow any author to make me cry but Mr. Richardson.

But, Sir, as injuries make a greater impression on us than benefits, as they raise something more turbulent than gratitude, I am in haste to come to my reproaches.

By an expression in your note, you seem to suspect us of levity, fickleness, and want  
of



of taste. That we should forget you in half four months, you think not only probable, but almost certain. Indeed you ground your fears on the shortness of our acquaintance: but then, Sir, you are in a mistake: 'tis we that are unknown to Mr. Richardson, not he to us. 'Tis not knowing a *place* that makes an acquaintance; 'tis knowing the sentiments, the manner of thinking, the sort of understanding; these we know, and these make an acquaintance. Indeed, to form a friendship, these must in some measure be applied to ourselves, and that requires time and frequent intercourse. I have admired Clarissa, and wept with her. I have loved Miss Howe, and execrated Lovelace with her; and a little despised Mr. Hickman. I have shook with horror and resentment at Lovelace and all his crew. I have detested the whole Harlowe family. In short, I am thoroughly acquainted with them all, and have had every passion and affection raised in me by them. And can Mr. Richardson say I have known him



but three days? No. *We* must put you in mind of *us*. That thought has already got over so much of my indolence, as to make me write ; and, when we come to town, will carry us to North End, if you are there : but, in the mean time, I wish we could bring it into the neighbourhood of Epsom.

You have not quite got over Miss Sutton's indolence yet, for I cannot persuade her to add some lines, tho' she desires me to assure you she is very ready to talk, whenever you will give her an opportunity. I fancy, if you would draw a fine man, as you have a woman, the young ladies would become your correspondents more readily.

Tho' we have great leisure here, our weather is so warm, it makes writing disagreeable ; so that this is the longest letter I have writ. Indeed, I am so very incorrect a writer, that I should make an excuse to a new correspondent, tho' my friends put up with all my blots and blunders. I should put my bad writing on want of time, hot weather,  
or



or something else, but I consider I shall not mend; and if we should continue our correspondence, I must find out new excuses every letter; so I had best make no merit but what I really have, which is a very high esteem for all those who dedicate their talents to the improvement of virtue, and who instruct and please me in their writings. As such, I shall always desire your conversation and correspondence.

I am, Sir,  
your obliged humble servant,  
A. DONNELLAN.

---

TO MRS. DONNELLAN.

*July 20th, 1750.*

MADAM,

I AM greatly obliged to you for the kind encouragement you give to my hopes of continued favour and future correspondence.



As to the *fine man*, what shall be done, if such ladies as Miss Sutton, who can so well tell what she does *not* like, will not do us the honor to let us know what she *does*? Will she, or will you, Madam, be so good as to acquaint me what he *is* to do, and what he is *not* to do, in order to acquire and maintain an exemplary character?

To avoid leading him into difficulties, such as challenges, &c. that a good man, *because* a good man would be (more than one of a contrary cast) subject to, because I might not know how to extricate him from them, consistent with his character. [All the ladies too, to a lady, loving what is called a *brave* man, that is, a man ready to give, and resolved not to bear offence] would be doing nothing.

And then, to make *sport* for the *tender-hearted* reader as he went along, must we not give him great distresses? only taking care to make him happy at last, as it is called: that is to say, in this life: for few, very few, care to pass to another, if they can help it.



Miss Sutton does me very great honour, when she desires, that I may be assured, that tho' she declines honouring me with her pen, yet that she will be very ready to talk whenever I give her the opportunity. But how am I obliged to Mrs. Donnellan, who is so kind as both to talk and write.

And is it *only* to *indolence* that I may ascribe Miss Sutton's silence? Perhaps, when the warm weather—but how dare I hope?

The young ladies will the more readily become my correspondents, you think, Madam, were I to draw the fine man. But the young ladies must help to *make* such a one. It is more in the power of young ladies than they seem to imagine, to make fine men.

I am afraid, very much afraid, that the fine man would not have the young ladies' suffrages in his favour, if he had not more of Lovelace than of Hickman in him.

I once heard a bird sing, and a sweet bird it was, that the man who would be signally beloved by a young lady, must do something  
to



to be forgiven for. Is this so? Can it be so, young ladies? I am not willing to believe it.

And yet forgiveness, even of injuries, is a *Christian duty*. And tho' the occasion given for the exercise of it may, at the time, make the eyes of a fair-one run over with pungent grief, yet the after-act of pardoning on the vows of the pretended penitent, may make her face shine with generous joy.

Happy for her, if the penitence hold! if the joy be durable!—But it will be almost ever found, that the wilful offender is a ready relapser; and still the readier, perhaps, for the easiness of the forgiveness.

Madam,

your most faithful and obliged

humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

TO



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Epsom, Aug. 17, 1750.*

SIR,

YOU will find by Miss Sutton's letter, which she has given me to inclose to you, that tho' you have made her break thro' her indolence, you cannot make her speak out about this agreeable man. Indeed, I believe the young ladies hardly know themselves, for want of patterns, what an agreeable man, with religion and sense, is ; which makes me wish you would shew them one. They are so used to see those they think genteel and polite, without morals and religion, that they imagine them almost, if not quite, incompatible ; and are afraid, if they insist too much on the last, they must give up the first.

As to myself, I was bred in Ireland ; and I think, in my youth there, we had young men that were virtuous and agreeable : but

'tis



'tis a great while ago; and they tell me, such characters are not now to be met with. Indeed, I think with you, that the young ladies themselves are very much in fault, especially those who have great fortunes, and have it in their power to reject and chuse. If they would shew a preference to virtuous characters, the young men would not, at least, be so daring in their immoralities: and hypocrisy is better, as to us, than barefaced vice: and from imitating, one might hope, some may grow really better. How we shall bring the young ladies into this scheme I can't tell. I don't know any one so likely to succeed as Mr. Richardson to form a character fit for the men to imitate, and the ladies to like: and that makes me extremely desire you would undertake it.

I do not think it necessary he should be apt either to give or to take offence. True courage and fortitude, I believe, is neither. 'Tis a greatness of soul I should wish in a man, not a contempt of life, from want of thought,



thought, or not considering where he is going. A warm constitution, high passions, and great pride, form the character too often called *a man of courage*. And as his warmth makes him an eager lover, so his lowering his pride to a particular woman, generally gains her; and that, I believe, made your pretty bird sing, *a man should do something to be forgiven for*; that is, a man must shew some very bad qualities to gratify the lady's pride in humbling himself to her as a lover, that he may have her in his power as a wife, to treat as badly, without being at the trouble of begging pardon.

But, Sir, you will say, I, that can a little despise Mr. Hickman, seem to favour those ladies in not liking a mild man: I think not. You did not design him a fine character. You put him in opposition to Lovelace, and shew 'tis better to chuse for a lover, that is to be a husband, one that is too tame, and has not those shining qualities, than venture to the hopes of reclaiming the more agreeable one.



one. But in a character that I should like, I would, even in a lover, have him shew those qualities that I should willingly submit to be governed by as a wife: and if a man let me use him with contempt as a lover, I don't know whether I should ever rightly respect him as a husband and friend.

You say this character comes to us by Miss Howe and Lovelace, and it comes to us no *other* way, or, at most, very slightly. They both brag they have treated him with the utmost contempt and ridicule: and they seem to think he is not only tame, but that he has hardly sense to find it out. Now this is not a respectable character; and a woman, I think, who marries a man that she does not esteem as such, runs a great hazard of being the husband, not the wife; and I should not like such a man for myself or friend, as such matches always look unnatural. So you must give me leave a little to despise Mr. Hickman as a husband, tho' in the opposition you have placed him in, he does extremely well.



well. And perhaps you thought Miss Howe's petulancy wanted some little pull-down, and he is still greatly to be preferred to a Lovelace.

We have no acquaintance here; nor, except we could chuse them, should desire any, for the few months we spend out of London. A few of the clergy are all we see. If we could have Mr. Richardson to preach to us sometimes, it would very much add to our pleasure and improvement; and I am sorry to find, since it would gratify both you and us, we can't.

Your most obliged

and humble servant,

A. DONNELLAN.

TO



TO MRS. DEWES.

*London, Aug. 20, 1750.*

MOST heartily do I thank good Mrs. Dewes for her recommendation of Mr. Chaponne to my acquaintance and friendship. I am greatly taken with him. A sensible, an ingenious, a modest young gentleman. Methinks I am sorry that this kingdom is likely so soon to lose him.

You charm me, Madam, with the equally beautiful and just things you say of your sister. In a letter she wrote to me, bewailing her separation from you, then going to take place, she calls you her beloved *Anna*, the *sister of her heart*. Yours and hers are not common loves. But you are not common sisters.

I have not been able to add a line to what I had written of the subject, two or three letters of which you saw.

My



My business has great calls upon me. I have within a few days past lost a dear, but unhappy brother.

My very relaxations are business.

All together, time of life too advanced, I fear I shall not be able to think of a new work. And then the task, as I have written to Mrs. Donnellan, is a very arduous one. To draw a man that *good* men would approve, and that young ladies, in such an age as this, will think amiable—tell me, Madam, is not that an arduous task?

Suffer your warm, your worthy heart, to expand on paper, on a subject that must equally delight us both—on Mr. Dewes' goodness; on your family's welfare; on your own health, and matronly employments and divertisements. In short, Madam, adopt me into your worthy family as one deeply interested in its welfare: and if you will oblige me with such extracts as I may be favoured with from the letters of your excellent sister, and with an account, as she writes it to you,  
of



of her health and the good Dean's, and of their employments, amusements, benevolencies, charities, &c. what charming subjects will here be for a correspondence—extracts without inscription, or subscription, or the form of a letter, will rejoice me, as they will give you less pain, and less attention; and I will endeavour to return extracts from some of my correspondencies: so, tho' far off, shall we be near, and mingle minds and concerns as true friends.

I am, Madam, with repeated respects to the gentleman so deservedly next your heart,

Your greatly obliged,

and faithful humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

TO



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Welsbourn, Sept. 24, 1750.*

WELL then, good, dear Sir, since you are so indulgent to me, as to place me among your friends (and hardly can you have one more sincerely so, than I find myself to be, and have been, from the moment I read your excellent *Clarissa*) I take the liberty you give of writing my thoughts, just as they occur, in hopes of the happiness of receiving yours in return—but how unreasonable am I, to desire gold for dross.

Your kind and most indulgent letter found me full of sorrow, and my spirits quite oppressed, by a succession of accidents. My eldest son just recovered of a dangerous fall from his horse; my two youngest children ill with violent whooping coughs; and my dear sister, the sister of my heart, had a fever, which, tho' made as light as possible  
to



to me, I knew was very bad. I send you inclosed the letters that give an account of her illness and recovery; for which blessing I can never be sufficiently thankful to Providence; and, thank God, my dear babes are also well again. My short pains are abundantly recompensed by innumerable blessings. Oh that I may turn them to a good use! You, my dear Sir, can instruct me better in that point than any body; but 'tis unreasonable to expect you should think of me, who have things of so much more importance to take up your time.

I am vastly rejoiced you like my young friend. I have received a letter full of rapture at your wisdom, goodness, and kind reception of him. From that early acquaintance, he says, he has received very great advantage. I transmitted your favourable sentiments of him, and kind postscript, to his mother, with which I am sure she will be delighted.

I hope all your sweet family are well, and  
that



that agreeable daughter, with the fine eyes, I saw at North End. O for another day, or rather week, at that pleasant habitation of a most worthy family!

I should be very happy to see your correspondencies. Any you are so good to communicate to me, I will faithfully return, and send you those letters I receive from my sister, that I think will give you most pleasure; but you must be so good as to take them altogether, as you know us not so well, and think with so much kindness of my sister, and partiality of me, that you will not wonder at the many things that would appear trifling to hearts less affectionate and interested in each other. I should be glad to transcribe only those passages that are most correct; but indeed I have not time.

Family affairs (which I am not above inspecting) my children (to whom I am schoolmistress, as well as nurse) the necessary civilities of a large and kind neighbourhood, many other affairs that intervene, besides



letter writing, and frequent bad fits of the headach, keep me in constant employment, sometimes more than I could wish in some things, which gives me less leisure for others more agreeable to me, which is reading, and writing to my friends.

Mr. Dewes is as busy as I am, tho' he has quite left off the law, but so far as he can be of service to his friends and neighbours, and indeed I must say, he is a counsellor and comforter to them all, having a truly charitable and benevolent heart, and being frequently as much hurried and fatigued in assisting and giving his advice to others, as he was in raising his own fortune. A happy exchange, profit for delight ! For surely the highest joy in this world is to communicate good. He desires his humble service to you and your kind and worthy partner; was vastly pleased with your most friendly and pathetic letter (for I have no reserve towards him.) We both hope to have the pleasure of seeing you and Mrs. Richardson again; but when, alas, I do  
not



not know; for going to London is not convenient to us.

I am delighted that you have overcome Miss Sutton's bashfulness and reserve, in making her write to you. Is she not a charming young woman, both for understanding and agreeableness?

But to return to the subject of my heart. You see the reason why you have not heard from my sister—a reason that I am sure will grieve you. She and the Dean both have the highest regard for you and all your works. I rejoice at every addition you make to *Clarissa*; tho', when I first read it, I did not think it could be improved. I can't help wishing you would publish *Clarissa's* meditations, as they must be of great use and pleasure to all who read them; and the few friends to whom I have shewed those you favoured me with, are greatly pleased with them, especially Lady Anne Coventry, aunt to the Duke of Beaufort, a lady of singular piety and religion, who has been a widow,

c 2

and,



and, like Anna the prophetess, walked in the house of God these forty years. She is also near fourscore, but enjoys health, and all the faculties of her mind in full vigour; employs them in goodness and ingenuity, and is very fond of Clarissa.

What a domestic letter have I wrote! I am ashamed to send it; but you have drawn it upon yourself, and will fear to give me farther encouragement; but for the future I will be more concise, tho' I know I shall increase in my esteem, and in being,

Your affectionate friend,

and faithful humble servant,

A. DEWES.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Sept. 25. 1750.*

SIR,

I HAVE often designed answering your last obliging and entertaining letter, but I don't know how it is, that tho' the country seems the place of leisure, it has its businesses and pleasures, and particularly of the writing sort, as one is (at least I am) from most of my family and friends.

But I don't know whether I am giving the main reason that has hindered me from writing, and whether the difficulties I find in the subject you propose to me, and which you so well represent, have not had the greatest share in my silence.

To think of a man with religion, sense, and agreeableness, is easy, and to say he shall have this and that good quality; but to work these up into a story, to produce these into



action—I know nobody who is capable of doing it but Mr. Richardson, and if he declines it, how shall I pretend to encourage him? And yet I wish he would try.

Indeed your health is of so much consequence, that I would by no means have you do any thing that should in the least prejudice it; and as you have a family distress on you, less now than at another time.

I am extremely sorry you should have such impediments, but the misfortune is, those who are fit to write delicately, must think so; those who can form a distress must be able to feel it; and as the mind and body are so united as to influence one another, the delicacy is communicated, and one too often finds softness and tenderness of mind in a body equally remarkable for those qualities. Tom Jones could get drunk, and do all sorts of bad things, in the height of his joy for his uncle's recovery. I dare say Fielding is a robust, strong man.

But to come to the point, of which you  
desire



desire our opinions ; the forming a man who shall unite the virtuous, the amiable, the genteel; to throw him into distresses, and extricate him with virtue and honour ; to make him shew courage enough to fight, and yet religion enough to refrain ; to love with ardour, and yet admire the beauties of his mistress's mind more than her person—I am afraid of falling into Juba in Cato, and Beville in the Conscious Lovers. If our hero must fight, let it be before we are acquainted with him ; and when once a man has shewn his courage, it will keep him from insult. Suppose the woman he likes engaged in her affections before she knew him, to one of a more modern cast, could we not make our hero shew virtue and honour, and at last, to the credit of my sex, triumph over the man of mode ?

I am sensible, 'tis impossible to give a man so delicate a distress as a woman ; their different situations will not bear it, nor can he so well complain, or raise so much compassion in others ; he cannot possibly shew the



sort of noble fortitude Clarissa does, as he cannot be in her sort of distress ; so that I am afraid, even the pen of a Richardson will not move us in his, as it has done in her history : but if it makes the man of virtue triumph over the man of fashion, or rather the Christian over the infidel, that is the end proposed.

The epistolary style is yours, 'tis speaking, 'tis painting; but I think there must be a friend to tell some things that a man can't tell of himself, for I am very delicate on the subject of self-praise, and think it should be as much avoided as possible; but when the scenes represented are passionate, they must come from the persons concerned, or they lose their spirit. Fine sentiments, and noble actions consequent to them, form the character to the reader without the persons being obliged to point them out themselves, and those I am persuaded you can point to us.

Some faults, you observe, our virtuous man must have, some sallies of passion ;  
the



the best *man's* character will bear it, tho' a Clarissa's would not.

I will not arrogate any merit to our sex from it, but suppose it arises from custom, education, or what you will, 'tis certain our man must not be an angel. Clarissa's goodness seems, if I may use the expression, *intuitive*. Our man, to make him natural, must have some failings from passion, but must be soon recovered by reason and religion, which will vary the character from hers extremely, and give another sort of turn and spirit to the whole. Lovelace, the more he thought the worse he acted, for his fault was in his heart, and strengthened by a bad education; his thinking raised his passions

Our man must have so much of the Christian and philosopher, that reflection must always set him right. In short, I think he must have more of Miss Howe than of Clarissa; and you seem to have known, that a Clarissa would not have spirit enough to go thro' the whole, and so formed Miss Howe



with a good degree of passion and spirit, and yet she has her merits, which management enlivens the whole.

I am come to the bottom of my frank, and assure you I write more for the pleasure of such a correspondent, and of setting him at work, than with any notion or pretension of assisting Mr. Richardson.

I believe we shall be in town in less than a fortnight, and shall hope to see you soon, and well, and then we will renew the subject.

My best wishes attend you and your family.

I am, Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

A. DONNELLAN.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

April 24, 1751.

SIR,

I Am unpardonable, I deserve your resentment. I am ashamed of myself, and that shame has helped to aggravate my fault, by hindering me some time from writing: and had it not been for an obliging paragraph of yours in my favour, that my sister sent me, I should not have had courage to have written at all. I am conscious of my own little merit, and fear the *pride of my heart* (the mind's arch enemy) prevents my doing what in gratitude to you, and for my own benefit, I ought to do. It shall not any more.

I have received great satisfaction in the acquaintance I have made between you and Mrs. Donnellan; I knew you must like each other; and some late circumstances (though painful to my friend) have, I believe, opened the excellence of her principles to you, more  
c 6 than



than some years acquaintance might have done without them. I am in pain for Mrs. P. on her daughter's account, but for her own sake, what is more to be wished (so well prepared for it as she is) than a quiet removal from the pains and infirmities of old age?

I am truly glad you like my young friend Miss Sutton: I think her a worthy creature; and very happy in her present situation. If any alteration happens in the family where she is, and it does not prove convenient to her and Mrs. Donnellan to settle together, my house is a home ready to receive her. Her mother was for near forty years my most steady and well-beloved friend; and I have often promised her, if I outlived her, to show all the friendship in my power to her daughter. Dr. Delany's generosity and indulgence to me on all occasions puts it in my power to keep my word with my dear deceased friend.

I must return you, good Sir, many thanks for your great friendliness to Mrs. Chapone  
and



and her family : she speaks of you with rapturous gratitude, and has informed me of your most kind invitation to my god-daughter, a young woman, who, upon acquaintance, I hope you will find not unworthy your favour. I have always thought her sensible, ingenious, modest, and humble, and not unamiable in her appearance, rather in my eyes pretty and engaging. I desire you will not, out of any complaisance to what I have said in her favour, disguise your own real thoughts about her ; for I wish to know your sincere opinion of her.

I will observe your directions about Clarissa, and write my impertinent observations in the margin, as soon as I get quietly to the deanery, which we propose to do about ten days hence.

I am glad Mr. Moore did not go on with his design of making a tragedy of Clarissa ; the alteration he proposed in making the heroine more in love would have taken off the delicacy and polish of her character. *In love* she certainly was—I cannot allow it was only liking.



liking. But a love so finely concealed, even from herself, and so nobly conquered, exalts her character. There is a coolness in mere liking, that any vulgar mind, for mere prudent reasons, can conquer. But it required something more than common heroism to act as Clarissa did. Great as it was, I cannot think it was improbable; armed with every virtue, and that of the highest kind, *true Christian virtue*, she could not fail but conquer.

Mr. Skelton is at his obscure living, remote from society; 'tis pity a man so well qualified to enjoy and improve conversation, should be shut out from it. He has promised to make us a week's visit as soon as we go to Mount Panther, our house in the deanery of Down. You will certainly be remembered among us.

Mrs. Barber continues in the same infirm state, confined to her bed; she has not this year had a regular fit of the gout, and that has made her suffer more lowness of spirits than usual.

Do



Do you think my sister can have so great a satisfaction as that of corresponding with Mr. Richardson, and not communicate it to me? She has told me how good, and kind, and useful you have been in enquiring out for a Mrs. Norton for our darling girl. I shall be glad when she has got an assistant of that kind, for I think the charge of teaching and taking care of body and mind of four children, too heavy a task for the tenderness of her constitution; and such a mother, such a wife, such a sister, and such a friend! should be preserved with the utmost care.

Now I must be very serious with you, and beg you will not think I give myself affected airs, in what I am going to say, for I speak from the sincerity of my heart. I am told that you have shewn some of my letters; and as I look upon you as my friend, and am open and free when I write to you, at all times incorrect, interlining, making blunders, what confidence can I have when I write to you if you show my letters? Let me entreat you never do it again, and by complying  
with



with my request, you will fix me your correspondent.

My best friend delivers his kindest respects, as I do, to you and all yours.

I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged friend and servant,

M. DELANY.

D. D. is much obliged to you for your kind offer about his pamphlet: all that he wishes is to have it made as useful as it can be made, by putting it into many hands; but how this is to be done, he says, you can best judge.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Delville, June 15, 1751.*

SIR,

I AM to thank you for a treasure, which, by your means, my sister is in possession of. She expresses great satisfaction in having got  
Mrs.



Mrs. W. into her family, who, by all the accounts she has given me, promises to be a Mistress Norton. I think the goodness of my sister's heart, and her engaging measures, must win Mrs. W.'s affections; and if we are not served with the heart, there can be no perfect reliance on the person we engage with. And if she acquits herself as well as she seems to promise, the name of servant will be lost in that of friend.

How vain and expensive is the fashionable education of young ladies; and nothing attended to but embellishing the person whilst the mind is uncultivated, turned to no useful study! No provision laid in for the accidents of life, they live a cypher in their father's house; the various scenes and changes of life not at all considered; ignorant of every duty; only taught to look as handsome as they can, and to be as fashionable in their phrase and gestures as in their caps and hoop-petticoats. It is vexatious to have creatures endued with reason act so irrationally. Some exceptions must be made.

I know



I know but *one Duchess of Portland*. I am not for neglecting the graces of the person, but they should be only as a fair binding to a fine book, which often may tempt people to examine what otherwise might be overlooked.

I think you have many difficulties to encounter for your *fine gentleman*, an epithet not often understood ; as little known. And no part more difficult than to make him brave, and avoid duelling, that reigning curse. Some vanity you must give him, of shewing his bravery, that he may dare to refuse that wicked, mean, fashionable vice. A proper fortitude of mind, and command of his passions, will prevent his giving a challenge ; and (a greater security than all) his christian virtue. But how to ward off a challenge, and preserve his character, is a task only to be undertaken by the author of *Clarissa*.

I am, Sir,

Your most obliged humble servant,

M. DELANY.

TO



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

16th August, 1751.

SIR,

I AM so happy to find that you are going on with your excellent work, (for such it must be) that I have been very impatient to thank you for your good news; but a hurry at Delville before we set out for our retirement, as we intended it should be, and a never-ceasing hurry since I came to it, have not allowed me time even to make that due acknowledgment, much less (were I capable of it) to undertake what you propose to me on education.

I have, indeed, often considered education as a point of infinite consequence, and have often wished to see it more thoroughly treated of than I have yet met with it; but it is very hard, I believe, to lay down rules for what must vary according to the various dispositions that are to be managed.

I wish mothers were less anxious about marrying their daughters. When they set  
them



them forward in their race, a husband is to be the prize. I wish they were taught to aim at a higher reward than even that of a good husband: to fill their different stations properly as they succeed one another, and to act virtuously and right from the only principle that can make their actions uniform and meritorious. It sometimes happens that husbands are not obtained; then how great the mortification, not to obtain that which we were taught to think the highest point of felicity.

You must not imagine, from what I say, that I am an enemy to marriage. I certainly am not. But I think a great deal of the vanity in dress, and love of public places, is owing to an eagerness of pleasing, and a desire of being seen, in hopes of getting a husband; and my sex's pride is greatly offended at so mean and unbecoming a submission: we were born to be courted and sought after; and do we not deserve the contempt and ridicule we often meet with, when we forget  
what



what is our due? As I am offended at this, I must own, I as much condemn a constrained affected behaviour: all pertness and snappishness, every degree of the coquet or the prude ought to be avoided; but how to lay down a rule for it I don't know. An easy, civil, cheerful manner is not to be taught; but may be attained by any body who considers the advantages of such a behaviour, and is desirous not only of giving no offence but of pleasing those she converses with. This is a large field, and were I to indulge myself on this favourite subject, I should take up too much of your time, and at last only convince you of the truth of what I have already said, that I am not capable of undertaking so important a task.

This morning, the Doctor received a letter from Mr. Skelton. He says he wishes you were to exhibit a bad woman as well as a good man. I don't know but I wish so too; but not as a principal figure, only in your background, and by way of shade to set off some  
of



of your brightest figures. You have in your *Clarissa*, 'tis true, given us a Mrs. Sinclair and some demi-fiends belonging to her. But there are (with grief I say it) in high life, ladies as pernicious and dangerous to deal with as that wretched crew, who having lived so carelessly (not to say worse), that in order to screen their own indiscretion, lay snares to catch the innocent and unwary; who make themselves extremely agreeable, useful, friendly, and obliging on all occasions; always in good humour, and never censorious—what destruction do they bring upon the earth! And here next to the assistance of Providence, a good and virtuous education is the only safeguard, not only for women but for men; for men have vanity as well as women, and are (I may venture to say to you) rather more in danger of suffering from temptation than women are. Cowardice ensures us often, and the fear of being exposed to the censure of the world has saved many a reputation; but men are above that, and the consequence is pretty well known.

As



As I suppose your history will admit of some episodes, I wish you could find occasion of exposing a sort of tyranny often practised by friends in authority, over young women, when they want to have them marry the man they have chosen. You'll say you have done that in your Harlowe family : mine is a less degree of tyranny, but the consequence may be as bad. The young lady is told by very indulgent parents, or other friends, who have loved and caressed her, that she must marry a very disagreeable man : if she does not, they shall conclude her inclinations are engaged ; otherwise she would not distress them to so great a degree as to refuse so extraordinary a settlement ; that she will forfeit the high opinion they have of her virtue and duty ; in short, they dazzle her understanding with false and tender reasonings, and she sacrifices all her happiness to avoid offending those she wishes so much to oblige.

Now, Sir, you see the danger of setting a woman a prating. I believe you will be  
more



more cautious for the future. I hope you will be so good as to set me right where I err, which will make me still more than I am

Your obliged

and faithful humble servant,

M. DELANY.

I am now reading Dr. Young's Night Thoughts, and can hardly forbear sending him a rapture of thanks for the entertainment and delight they give me, and above all for raising my mind so much above *This poor terrestrial citadel of man.*

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

October 24, 1751.

DEAR SIR,

MY time has been fully employed since I left London. I staid a fortnight with Mr. and Mrs. Southwell, and had the pleasure of seeing their son mend in his health while I  
was



was there, leaving them better than I found them, and of having obliged two of the best people I know by my visit: indeed it cost me some trouble, for the roads across the country were so extremely bad, that I almost wonder how we got through them; however, with a coach, post-chaise, and a double horse, with the friendly care of an agreeable man, a relation who came to Mr. Southwell's to conduct me on, I got very safely to Chester in five days. There I met Mrs. Shuttleworth, and finding a crowd of fine people waiting for the king's yacht which was expected in every tide, and not loving a crowd, especially in a ship, we hired a small vessel for ourselves, and the wind being fair, went on board the next morning at six o'clock, and landed about seven the next evening on one of the quays in Dublin. It being too late to come here, I sent to my sister's to acquaint her I was landed, and the Bishop of Clogher came immediately and carried me to his house; and the next day



my dear Mrs. Delany came and brought me here,—a sweet refreshment after my fatigues. If I was poetically inclined, I could give you such a description of the bay of Dublin, (the most grand and beautiful scene I ever saw) and the friendly, hospitable, and sweet retreat of Delville, that I should make you wish you had taken Mrs. Delany's invitation and my proffer of conducting you to a place so suited to your taste and temper. But really, my good friend, I am much more likely to fall into the stile of a bill in chancery, than to write a letter fit for the author of that noble specimen of human nature, Sir Charles Grandison.

I have lately heard so fine an action of your friend Mr. Skelton, that my friendship is ready for him if ever I have an opportunity of proffering it, and in the mean time he has my high regard and esteem. I cannot tell you the affair, as there is a person concerned whom it is not proper for me to mention.

Now, my dear Sir, as to my own situation, I am as happy as it is possible to be in my  
present



present home ; and there is nothing that the obligingness of the Dean and the tender friendship of Mrs. Delany can do, that is wanting to make me so. I have been received in general by my friends and acquaintance with a seeming pleasure ; but by those nearest to me I am treated with a cold civility, worse I think than no notice at all, as it looks like a sort of condescension : we will take some notice of this creature as a relation, though she does not deserve to be treated as so very near a one as she is.

Mrs. Delany's best compliments and wishes attend you ; she will write next. Adieu ! May health attend the exertions of your genius and the enjoyment of your leisure ; and then you cannot fail of amending the world and delighting your friends, among whom I have the pleasure of ranking myself, being, dear Sir,

Your affectionate and obliged

friend and servant,

A. DONNELLAN.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Dublin, Dec. 14, 1751.*

MY dear agreeable friend, Mrs. Donnellan, has communicated to me the sketch you have sent her of your truly fine gentleman. I have no fears about him, I am sure he will be as complete as human fancy and judgment can make him. He has furnished us with many agreeable conversations, and often do we wish you of our fire-side party with your charming manuscript in your hand. She has told me your dispute about Harriet's owning her passion so freely: if she has mere liking only, she may tell her mind without reserve; but if she is downright in love, it is impossible she should, if as delicate as I am sure you would have her be; and this is not to be called disguise, as it is not in her power to act otherwise, for love in pure delicate minds is so cautious, and fearful of losing the esteem they wish to gain, that it  
refines



refines all the sentiments of the heart, and sets a double guard on every word and look, lest they should betray what they would hide even from themselves if possible. But this restraint goes no farther than till the favoured person has made his passion known. Then, I think, Harriet may (nay, should) frankly and generously own her inclination. In the mean time, I should only allow of some involuntary approbations, which may flatter Sir Charles, but for which, if Harriet recollects them, she should condemn herself.

I am very glad that, upon further acquaintance, my god-daughter is so happy as to have your approbation; she is much obliged to you, and all your family, for your most kind entertainment of her: her mother, whose heart is apt to overflow with gratitude, makes great acknowledgments to me for your favours to her daughter.

It is very unnecessary for me to tell you how happy I am in the enjoyment of Mrs. Donnellan's conversation; you are well ac-

D 3

quainted



quainted with her excellencies, and with the tender regard I have long had for her. I glory not a little in having established not only an intimacy between you and her, but a friendship. She does you justice on all occasions. I was going on when the clock warned me to make ready for dinner, and has luckily released you from any farther trouble at this time from,

Sir, your faithful friend,  
and humble servant,

M. DELANY.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Delville, Feb. 11, 1752.*

SIR,

YOU must certainly imagine me very stupid not to have answered a letter of so much entertainment as that you were so obliging to write me so long ago. But, Sir,  
Mrs.



Mrs. Delany did write to you, and my indolence made me flatter myself that I might have the pleasure of hearing of you without writing. You that know human nature so well, I think, will allow I have done as all indolent people do, flatter themselves that they may sit still, and yet all things shall go right; for if they could certainly know the penalties they must suffer by their neglects, they would shake off this bane to all right actions, indolence! I rejoice to find you proceed in the noble design of shewing the man of virtue in all the different circumstances of social life. But what can you mean by seeming uncertain whether you shall publish it? and how can you be so cruel to your own generation, as to think of leaving it to another? Is it that we do not want such a pattern, or that you imagine there are others can give it better? Will you leave us to Capt. Booth and Betty Thoughtless for our examples? As for poor Amelia, she is so great a fool we pity her, but cannot be hum-



ble enough to desire to imitate her. But pray, Sir, you that desire women should be learned, what do you say to Mrs. Atkinson? Must we suppose that if a woman knows a little Greek and Latin she must be a drunkard, and virago? Now, perhaps, you have not read this stuff, but I desire you will, and then I think your conscience must make you publish. Poor Fielding, I believe, designed to be good, but did not know how, and in the attempt lost his genius, low humour. Who the author of Betsy Thoughtless is I don't know, but his poetic justice I think very bad: he kills a good woman to make way for one of the worst, in my opinion, I ever read of; but I only mention these, to excite Sir Charles Grandison to rescue us out of their hands.

I have had the pleasure of hearing by Miss Sutton that you are pretty well, and she has told you I am so: indeed, notwithstanding law and other vexations, I am rather grown fatter; my good friends here are so good to  
me,



me, I have had nothing but pleasure at home. The *law's delay*, which I think Shakespear reckons up as one of the causes that would make a man destroy his own being, has not even made me lean, though it really gives me great uneasiness, as it keeps me in uncertainty when I can return to England, and see my good friends there. Dr. Delany has the same uncertainty from the same cause, but I hope we shall all be able to get over our business before the summer is over, and come together.

I beg my best services and wishes to Mrs. Richardson and the young ladies.

I am, Sir,

Your most obliged humble servant,

A. DONNELLAN.



TO MRS. DONNELLAN.

*London, Feb. 22, 1752.*

DEAR MADAM,

WHAT a plea is indolence to make to a man who is immersed in such a variety of business and other engagements, that take him up fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, sometimes eighteen tedious hours out of every twenty-four? and by a lady who can perform with so much ease, and give so much delight by her pen? I rejoice, Madam, in your increased health and flesh; (may I say flesh speaking of a lady of ethereal mould?) but I will not allow that it shall, as it too often does, diminish your spirit. A lady who can make a plea of indolence, and expect to have it allowed, must almost resolve not to guard against its encroachments; and man himself is not a greater encroacher.

What can I mean, you are pleased to ask, by seeming uncertain whether I shall publish  
my



my new work? Have I not, Madam, already obtruded upon the world many volumes; and have I not reason to apprehend that the world will be tired of me if I do? Where will this scribbler stop, will it not be asked? But when no more can be written or published by the same hand, then indulgence will possibly for that very reason be exerted in favour of the new piece. And a defunct author will probably meet with better quarter than a living one; especially as he is known to be a man in business, an obscure man, and one who is guilty of a very great presumption in daring to write at all, or do any thing but print the works of others.

Will I leave you to Captain Booth? Capt. Booth, Madam, has done his own business. Mr. Fielding has over-written himself, or rather *under*-written; and in his own journal seems ashamed of his last piece; and has promised that the same Muse shall write no more for him. The piece, in short, is as dead as if it had been published forty years ago, as to sale.



You guess that I have not read *Amelia*. Indeed I have read but the first volume. I had intended to go through with it ; but I found the characters and situations so wretchedly low and dirty, that I imagined I could not be interested for any one of them ; and to read and not to care what became of the hero and heroine, is a task that I thought I would leave to those who had more leisure than I am blessed with.

Parson Young sat for Fielding's parson Adams, a man he knew, and only made a little more absurd than he is known to be. The best story in the piece, is of himself and his first wife. In his *Tom Jones*, his hero is made a natural child, because his own first wife was such. *Tom Jones* is Fielding himself, hardened in some places, softened in others. His *Lady Bellaston* is an infamous woman of his former acquaintance. His *Sophia* is again his first wife. *Booth*, in his last piece, again himself ; *Amelia*, even to her noselessness, is again his first wife. His brawls, his jarrs, his gaols, his spunging-houses,



houses, are all drawn from what he has seen and known. As I said (witness also his hamper plot) he has little or no invention: and admirably do you observe, that by several strokes in his *Amelia* he designed to be good, but knew not how, and lost his genius, low humour, in the attempt.

I want much your assistance and Mrs. Delany's, in describing a scene or two in upper life. Miss Sutton is so intent upon *practising* (at least I tell her so) the racketting life, that she cannot give me one line of the *theory*.

You cannot imagine, Madam, how uneasy I made the Speaker, by acquainting him with his forbearing to make his compliments to you at Bath. Mr. Leake gave him no intimation of you, he says. It was eight or ten years ago since he saw you, and never but once. He bid me over and over assure you, that of all the ladies he knows, he would not have misbehaved to Mrs. Donnellan; and on the contrary, would have rejoiced in an opportunity to pay his particular respects to



to you : and he has asked me, as often as I have seen him since, if I have set this matter right with you, and done him justice.

I am, madam, with the greatest respect,  
Mrs. Delany's, the Dean's, and

Your most faithful  
and obliged humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MRS. DEWES.

*London, Feb. 22, 1752.*

DEAR MADAM,

I AM extremely sorry to hear of your frequent indispositions. But the time is coming when you will ail nothing ; for Mrs. Donnellan lets me know from Dublin, that your beloved *sister*, the *Dean*, and *herself*, hope to be in England before the summer is over.

I cannot but wish that with regard to  
your



your nursery, you had tried C— H— so recommended, and whose youth and prettiness were the only objections you had to her. An indiscreet person, at thirty, thirty-five, or thirty-eight, will hardly ever be discreet; and will not always be humbled, even by mortifications. A discreet young creature will be as ready to take an example in such a family as your's, as be able to give it to your children. Youth is good-humoured; and has hopes, and a character to maintain. Prettiness gives a discreet person some value of herself, and is a security, if she be not bad in her heart, that she will not render herself cheap. I never saw a young woman that I should have liked so well for your purpose (a companion for children) as Sophia.

But, madam, I think there is, as in flowers and flowering shrubs, something pleasing to the eye in a pretty person. I love to look at such a one, as I do upon a fine picture, and consider her as a credit to her species, when goodness joins with beauty. Very often have  
I blamed



I blamed that narrowness in some ladies of my acquaintance, who make a grace and an advantage a punishment of the person so adorned. Modesty, humility, complete a character; and are they not to be met with in a more amiable, as well as in a less amiable person? Not so frequently, say some. Perhaps pride and vanity may make such persons not rare; but when we hear of them shall we value them for their good qualities because they are pretty? I have known homely men, as well as women, very proud and very insolent. Pride and evil qualities are seated in the heart, not in the skin or face. I have accounted for the pride of the plain men and women, as a consciousness that they are not so happy in their persons as some of their fellow-creatures, but yet will not give themselves up, and therefore hope to supply by arrogance those defects which humility would conceal, and induce us to pity; by that means making themselves more contemptible by their manners, than they are by their persons. I remember a young fellow, who had bow knees;



knees; he wore his coat long to hide the defect; he would strut along the streets, his cane dangling on a button, and aim at an erectness in his neck and person, which called upon him every one's attention: and never forgave a sister for telling him, that unfortunately his long coat made his bow knees more visible, when he, having, by the help of his taylor, concealed them from himself, thought nobody else could see them.

My wife and I are greatly obliged to you, Madam, for the kind invitation you give to a daughter of mine, in her company to Welsbourn; but my wife considers Miss Chapone as her own child; she will not be able to part with her without regret, and it would break her peace, she says, to part with two daughters at once; so, as I have written to Mrs. Chapone, we must deny our girls that gratification, for such it would be to any of them.

Your faithful and obliged

humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

TO



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Delville, March 26th, 1752.*

DEAR SIR,

YOUR last most obliging letter deserves my best and quickest thanks, as you put me in mind of the agreeable scheme of our joining in house, coach, &c. I assure you I hope to spend much of my time in the sweet retreat of North End, tho' I should have a house in London; your company and the country will be powerful attractions, and easily draw me from what is called pleasure by the young and gay: this, at my time of life, is not extraordinary, but an agreeable friend in the country was what I always preferred to a hurry of diversions, even when I was thought fit for them and they for me; and surely I shall not grow young, and I hope not gay now. A fondness for the amusements and gaieties of fashionable life in an advanced age, seems to me not only contemptible but miserable, tho' I have often  
heard



heard people envied for it. I can no more wish to have a relish for youthful amusements, than I can to envy a child playing with a rattle; for surely every stage of life should have its pleasures properly suited to it as every sense has. A lady here, who owns herself seventy-seven, has lately given a sample of this sort of contemptible old age, that I think is worthy of your pen to animadvert upon. There was a great entertainment made by fifty gentlemen at one of the theatres, of music, dancing, eating and drinking, and all sorts of gaieties, which cost them thirty guineas a piece, and lasted from eight in the evening till the same hour the next morning; and this evergreen was more solicitous to get a ticket, and to have a fine new gown to appear there, than any young body; and this I have heard her much admired for. “Is not she a wonderful woman? Lord, how happy, how charming it is at her time of life to be able to relish such an entertainment, and to be as lively at it as she could have



have been at fifteen ! I wish I may have such spirits if I live to be old." And such sort of praises bestowed on the poor woman, who is as deaf as a post, and so can't hear them, but answers at cross-purposes, for fear you should find out she has one sign of age. Now, my good friend, I fancy you could introduce a scene to shew old age is contemptible when it is unnatural; and as a fury, I think I may call it, for diversions is got into all ranks, degrees, and ages, should one not endeavour to shame the old, as well as restrain the young? and shew that one who has lived to near fourscore, and has retained all the frivolous spirits of fifteen, is to be pitied, not envied? I only hint, and leave you to enlarge.

I long extremely to see how you have proceeded in your fine design ; for merely to be told of a scene between such and such, and the little incidents of the story, does not satisfy me ; I want the passions, the scenery. You are very humble in desiring help and  
scenes



scenes to be given you. Indeed the manners of high and fashionable life consist in a sort of routine, as the French call it, which varies so often, that it must be caught flying. I think the present turn is taste, and to give you a better notion than my own of it, I will transcribe some lines of a letter I had lately from Mrs. Montague on that subject. Speaking of a new farce, "I hear it is a ridicule upon taste, which begins to be a very sacred subject, it makes the principal merit of a modern character; the cheats of Scapin, or the politics of Machiavel are respectable in a man of taste. Does a general want courage, or a judge integrity, no matter if he has taste. Those who build churches or hospitals do not desire you should reverence their piety or esteem their charity, they wish you may approve the architecture of the edifice, and observe it is done in taste." So far Mrs. Montague. I think taste, I mean this extravagant admiration for it, would be a very proper subject for Sir Charles Grandison to expatiate on.

Since



Since I began this letter I have received one from Miss Sutton, who tells me she spent a most agreeable week at North End; but the account she gives me of you does not please me. I beg you, in the name of friendship, to take care of yourself, and don't apply too much to writing; the imaginary Sir Charles will not make us amends for the real Mr. Richardson. I hope to see you this summer, tho' my business is not finished.

The Dean and Mrs. Delany are very uncertain whether they shall be able to leave his business this year to visit her friends in England, and this makes her very uneasy, and is a great mortification to me, that hoped to have carried them with me. She and the Dean desire their kindest compliments to you and your family.

I am, with great sincerity,

your most obliged friend

and humble servant,

A. DONNELLAN.

TO



TO MRS. DEWES.

*June 21st, 1752.*

MOST heartily do I congratulate my dear, and good Mrs. Dewes on her recovery, and on Mr. Dewes's restored health. God Almighty carry you as happily thro' the distemper so dreaded, especially in the country, with which your young family are afflicted. In proportion to this dread will be your joy, when the affliction is over.

The *good man*, alas! I knew not what the task was which I undertook. He is grown under my hands from a thin gentleman, as I designed him, to a gigantic bulk. And there are so many things that may be done, and said, and written by a common man that cannot by a good man, that delicacies arise on delicacies. And how should I, a man, a very ordinary man, unlearned, all my early years employed to get a mechanic business for a livelihood, and not a little sedulous in that, touch those subjects as they require,  
the



the scenes, most of them, in high life? I have, however, written a great deal, thro' an encrease of my nervous malady, and a business that is enough to engage my whole attention: how well, is another question. But if it be likely to disgrace what I have done, it will never see the light. Hitherto it has not been disapproved of by some people of judgment, who have seen parts of it. And this I can say, I borrow not from any body, no, not from myself; and, I think, whatever it wants, it has variety.

Miss Sutton is very well. You have an high opinion of her: but I persuade myself that you know not fully her endowments and abilities. She is prudent above her years, but is too industrious to conceal her talents. I too seldom see her. I live in the city; and my side of Temple-Bar abounds with nuisances. Miss Sutton would not think so: but as her acquaintance are in the upper life, that upper life is low enough to despise the metropolis, which furnishes them with all their beloved luxury: they are building fine  
houses



houses out of hogsties, and cow-houses, and dog-kennels, in situations which are an hundred times less eligible than the dirtiest parts of Whitechapel, as it seems for no reason, but to get as far removed as they can from the city. This is taste—and Miss Sutton keeping such company generally, they take up her time too much for her to think of her city friends, tho' she has too much goodness to despise them for being so unfashionably situated.

When I have the pleasure of seeing her, I will give her your hint, that you seldom hear from her.

I repeat my wishes, dear Madam, for a happy issue to your present sufferings and apprehensions, and that nothing may happen to the end of the long life I wish you both, to chequer yours and good Mr. Dewes' comforts, to whom I beg the sincere respects of, Madam,

Your truly affectionate and  
faithful humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Thursday Morning, 9th Nov. 1752.*

DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE many things to say to you, but your visits are so short, and that morning your illness and my pictures too much employed us. I want you to assure the Speaker, that I think myself greatly honoured by his visit, but that it has left two regrets on my mind; one, that I was not at home to receive the pleasure of it, and the other, that I do not know how properly to acknowledge it, but that I should do myself the honour to wait on Mrs. Onslow, if I did not fear my visit would be troublesome to her. 'Tis owing to you, my dear friend, and your partial character, that I have had this notice taken of me by the most respectable man in England; it lies on you to sustain me, and we know how you can sustain a character that your imagination has formed.

Now,



Now, my dear Sir, I should talk a little of the pleasure I have had in reading some of your last scenes; but you, contrary to the spirit of all authors, call for correction, not praise. I could be much more lavish in the latter, through opposition sake, which you say we women love; and to draw you out, I generally, when we are together, chuse the former. But, my dear Sir, you want me to write down the impertinent, and often, perhaps, injudicious things I throw out in conversation; do you consider that I can talk twenty times as fast as I can write? nor would I, I assure you, stand by every thing I say, as I sometimes love to make you laugh at my own expence; however, I have made some little marks in the books I had, and as you seem to desire to shorten, I have in some places thrown out words that I thought did not strengthen the sense, &c. &c.

As to your plan, you know I can never quite come into your notion of a double love, though I own you have managed it as well



as (what shall I call it?) an unnatural affair can be managed; but Clementina has annihilated Harriot, what will you do to raise her? Clementina is the heroine, she is an angel; the poor mortal Harriot will make no figure after an angel, nor would I wish her to have Sir Charles Grandison. I think Sir Charles's invitation to the family, except the angel, to make him a visit in England, is a little cruel; to tell you fairly, I don't like it. Jeronimo I can bear, but not the father and mother. I have but one fault to find with Sir Charles; and that is, he has no fault, no passions; indeed, Sir, you have a charming hand at drawing angels, how dare we poor mortals converse with you, and let you see our weaknesses? Lady G—— is not indeed an angel; I like her mortal spirit very well sometimes, but sometimes I think she is too much the reverse of her brother; I know I should imagine her ill-natured, and fly from such an acquaintance. Her frequent jokes on personal defects and infirmities, I think, are  
the



the marks of a low mind and genius, and she is really too proud of being young and married. Now you will say, I am concerned for the old maids—perhaps I am; who is there that does not take part in a general odium cast on his particular country, class, society, &c.? But seriously, my good Sir, I think the ridicule thrown upon old maids has often hurried women into wrong and imprudent matches, from the fear of being left to that despised state, and so has had a bad effect. But do you know, that despicable as you think that state, 'tis the one I should wish the angelic Clementina to live to, without taking refuge in a convent; I cannot bear her marrying.

I had wrote thus far, when I recollected I was writing down my own scattered incoherent thoughts, when I had a new book of yours to read; so down went the pen, and I never quitted your book till I finished it, (nine o'clock at night). I have run it over quick, from my own eagerness, and your desire of having it soon, and can only say, my



dear Mr. Richardson, do not marry the angel Clementina to the hair-brained Count de Belvidere; let her sustain her glorious and uncommon character; let not the sweet enthusiast, as Sir Charles calls her, sink into a common woman. Till I know how this is, I will not write a word more: so adieu. Let me see you soon—can't you dine with me on Saturday?

I am your affectionate,

if you don't vex me,

A. DONNELLAN.

Aunt Nell's Badger desires to join her compliments.

TO



TO MRS. DELANY.

*March 14th, 1753.*

MOST heartily, dear Madam, I thank you for the favour of your remembrance; and for the kind and welcome assurances you give me of your continued esteem.

God Almighty give an happy issue to the soul-harrowing perplexities which you and the Dean have so long laboured with, from the chicaneries of the law! The disturbance given to minds so beneficent, may be said to be a public grievance; as it must have affected the Dean in his studies, and his lady in those spirits which gave joy to all her acquaintance.

We may be said to have Mrs. Desbrough—but there is a bar between us—Temple-bar—ladies who live near Hill-street, and Berkeley and Grosvenor squares, love not to pass



this bar. They speak of it, as if it were a day's journey from them.

May Sir Charles Grandison answer your expectations, when he lays himself at your feet! I have made him relieve one worthy family from the oppression of the law. Were he a real character, your merits, Madam, would secure to you his friendship.

You give me great pleasure in the hopes of seeing you soon in England, with the Dean.

Dr. Young has been with me for a few days past, attending a play, long ago written, and the profits of acting of which, accruing to the author, he has given to the society for propagation of the Gospel, as you have no doubt heard.

He rejoiced to hear of your health and fortitude, and the Dean's. He most heartily, with me, congratulates you both on the glimmering hope you mention. He greatly pities you both, and speaks of the law and lawyers, from experience, as you do. He desired me  
to



to make you his sincerest compliments, and thanks you for the kind regard you profess for him.

I thank you, Madam, for the Dean's opinion of a certain performance. If the author of it has concealed many of the great man's virtues, it is pity that some other hand does not do justice to so great a name.

Miss Chapone continues with me, tho' she was absent for some months in the summer. I gave her your letter. She is a grateful, good young creature. Every body loves her.

As to my own health, I may say with the Dean of St. Patrick's,

That old vertigo in my head,  
Will never leave me till I'm dead.

I have made yours and the Dean's compliments to the Bishop of Oxford, and his friends, at the deanery, who were exceedingly rejoiced at the glimmering of hope you mention, and desired their best wishes and respects.



Every body speaks well of Madam Maintenon's letters.

Adieu, dear and good Madam! God grant to you both all your worthy wishes, prays, Madam and reverend Sir,

Your most faithful and  
obedient servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Bulströde, Dec. 20th, 1753.*

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE begun a second time with Sir Charles Grandison, and assure you, in the main, I am better pleased with it than I was upon the first reading it; and yet now and then a little objection starts up before me, which I think it the part of a friend to communicate with an honest openness. I was offended with three words, *leer*, *ogle*, and *stare*, to which I am sure I shall never be reconciled,  
at



at least from the mouth of a fair lady, as they are there used.

I have another objection, of more consequence, and it is the only one I can remember. You put the defence of learning in the mouth of a fool, and it succeeds accordingly. I am far from blaming your ridicule of pedantry. Harriet very properly exposes it, with a great deal of wit and good sense. But she, who had been so well instructed by her grandfather, a man of learning, should, methinks, have found something in defence of it, wherewith to have finished the dispute.

Your quotation from Burnet does no honour to your cause. He was no man of learning; nor did I ever hear of any one of his nation that was so esteemed. The gentry of them have a more general tincture of literature than those perhaps of any other country: but none of them have been numbered among what the world deemed greatly learned.

Nor is Mr. Locke's authority of much more weight in the point before us. He was a



clear-headed man, but very far from being a master of polite literature. And I, indeed, think him exceptionable, even in his principles of right reasoning, as well as those of his philosophy, in which you find him censured in my discourse upon the Immortality of the Soul, now, I presume, in your hands.

It is true, you have made some amends for the disgrace cast upon learning, by the subsequent defence of it from Sir Charles Grandison; but I fear the learned world will not think it quite satisfactory. And it is certain, that the arguments from the lights of religion are quite against you, because they are all derived to us from the learned, and must be perpetually supported by them, and diffused from them.

The freedom I here take, indeed, is (and I hope will be thought so) the best proof of that sincere affection and esteem wherewith I am, dear Sir,

Your faithful friend, and

most obedient humble servant,

PAT. DELANY.

TO



TO MRS. DELANY.

June 29th, 1754.

MOST heartily do I congratulate my dear and good Mrs. Delany, the Dean, and Miss Chapone, on their safe arrival at charming Delville, after so blustering a passage. Well might the young lady behave with magnanimity. Had she not as much reason to rely on the care of Providence as Cæsar on his fortunes, when he encouraged the Egyptian boatman in a like storm? Were not the Dean of Downe and his excellent lady in the same vessel with her? But as one evil lessens the dread of another, I have had it whispered to me, that the dear girl was so agitated with the sea-sickness, that she could not spare a moment for the apprehension of another, though greater danger. The most celebrated heroes have often owed to *accident* their fame for magnanimity and generalship. You and the Dean can give instances of this from story,



story, ancient and modern. Yet would I not detract from the merits of our young friend. I have on some occasions seen traces of heroineship in her. Have I not been present when, on an argument with her brother, so dearly beloved by her, in *exaltation* (it was more than in *defence*) of her sex, she has both scolded and wept in the same moment? An amiable mixture in a lady, that promises magnanimity and victory when called to the occasion.

I rejoice with you, Madam, on the high and deserved approbation that the Observations, &c. meets with in Dublin. Those who have seen the piece here as highly commend it, as do its readers with you. But the printer has been twice with me, to lament that it is too little inquired after, people supposing it to be the production of some bookseller's author, and this owing, as he believes, to the expectation that has been given by advertisement of Mr. Dean Swift's book. I have desired, empty as the town is, that it may be  
kept



kept advertised in the public papers. It wants only to be known ; and I have talked of it occasionally to talkers.

The secret, as to the author, is extremely well kept. But there are who give it to the Dean of Downe, because of his known intimacy with the Dean of St. Patrick's, and of the genteel spirit preserved in it. Our dear friend, Mrs. Donnellan, to whom I lent the borrowed sheets, told me, that were it not for a few passages in them, which she thought wanted the *accuracy* of the Dean of Downe, she should have concluded it to be his. She was greatly pleased with it, and particularly with the impartial spirit preserved in it.

I am confident that the Observations must be extremely approved, when known and read. But yet, from Ireland, I expect the greatest demand : for Swift is not so much a favourite with *us* as with the *Irish*. The men of wit and taste will always admire him, and in every country—but they are few.

Mrs.



Mrs. Donnellan owned herself much better in health than she had been for some time while with us at North End. (It is *South* End from Hampstead and Highgate, only *North* from the mother church, that of Fulham, to which that of Hampstead is but a chapel.) She, therefore, having tender lungs, as supposed, has removed from the balmy air around us, as the late ever-to-be respected owner of the now Lord Hillsborough's house near us thought it, to the brisker air of Hampstead. I did myself the honour to dine with her there, at her particular invitation, yesterday. The weather had not been propitious—she complained—I chid her for her removal. But these *single* ladies—Upon my word, Madam, I do think it is not so very much amiss sometimes, that control—but no more on this subject. I will only add, that she rejoices in her prospects, variegated with hill and dale. They are certainly fine. But she was forced to hide herself from them, by hurrying within doors at one time, and  
from



from the windows at another, while she was pointing at those prospects to me, by way of preference to poor North End. But I hope, since she is gone from us, that the Midsummer season will, at last, take place even at Hampstead, and make the air of it at that place as soft in July, as that of our *South* End in April. I think there is near that difference, except she had chosen her situation under the hills in Pond-street, which is preferred generally by those who love Hampstead, yet cannot bear the keen air of the hills.

Dr. Young is another uncontrollable, therefore unaccountable. He had been in town, somewhere behind the Royal Exchange, for three weeks, without letting me know a syllable of the matter till the very day that, ready booted, (Friday, last week) he called in Salisbury-court, leaving word (I was out) that he was very desirous of seeing me at Wellwyn. I wish that he is not concerned in some plot, by this his privacy to one of his sincerest friends. He is an absent man, you know,



know, Madam, and if he be in a plot, it will not be long a secret. Of this, we may be sure, it will not be against the state.

Your most obliged

and faithful humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Delville, July 20th, 1754.*

I AM much obliged to my good friend for his most welcome letter, and kind congratulations on our arrival at Delville, which is at this moment in all its pride of sweetness. Delville is a fair emblem of true friendship—there is shade and shelter for various seasons, and sweet repose and refreshment when wearied with the toils of the world. My Sally says you are very sly; she does not altogether deny the charge of the scolding and weeping scene.



scene. I saw her very near in the same condition on a word being offered in justification of part of Mr. Faulkner's most scandalous behaviour; her cheeks flushed, her eyes glistened; and if great justice had not been done at the same time to the excellent author of the excellent Sir Charles Grandison, I don't know what mischief might have ensued. Sir Charles is the reconciler of all differences.

I am very sorry Mrs. Donnellan was not controllable in the point of going into the sharp air of Hampstead, for which I doubt she has suffered. Your dash after *control* is a challenge; I turn you over to the single ladies, they are numerous enough, and some, I am sure, (particularly of your acquaintance) able enough to defend their own cause.

I am glad you find a *man* can be an uncontrollable creature, as well as a *woman*. But who would not grieve that Dr. Young, &c.? But why should I grieve about him? had he a tenth part of the value for me that I have for him, I should have seen him (tho' only in  
his



his boots) whilst I was in England : the surest revenge I can think of, is to make him a visit at Wellwyn. If you go you will do an immoral thing—reward where you ought to punish, and contrary to your usual dealings.

A little more patience, I have not done with you yet. I have this day written to my dear Mrs. Donnellan; I must condemn her, tho' I am loth, for going to that ugly Hampstead, I have never loved it since Clarissa suffered such persecution there. The next time you write, I beg you will mention particularly Miss Mulso and Miss Prescott; it is impossible to know them, and be indifferent about them; there is not a seat in my garden unacquainted with their names. The Dean and Sally say, in that particular they are as much concerned as I am—I can't deny it. And now I have done my worst by you for this present writing, and only detain you to assure you I am, good Sir,

Your obliged and faithful

humble servant,

M. DELANY.

TO



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Welsbourn, March 21, 1755.*

HOW unworthy do I appear (and in appearance only I hope) of the kind remembrance of my good Mr. Richardson, which made me happy last Sunday? How much do I wish to have those most truly useful and excellent sentiments engraven in my heart. I have sent the valuable book to my Lady A. Coventry, being always happy to give her any pleasure in my power, with one of the letters to the clergyman, who made objections some few others have done, which are fully answered. I am always glad to hear the few objections that have or can be made, or imagined, to Pamela, Clarissa, or Grandison, as it obliges the excellent author to give us more of his thoughts; and *more* and *more* we are wishing and desiring to have, notwithstanding the treasure he has already furnished us with. My dear god-daughter



daughter left me on Monday ; her heart is full of gratitude and true affection for you, dear Sir, and all your family, which strongly appeared in her sensible and glistening eyes, whenever we talked of you ; and how often that was you must reckon by the days (I may say hours) that we have been together. That she has not wrote oftener I must take upon myself ; her time has been greatly taken up in kindly assisting me in working, and the care of my daughter, my household affairs lying more upon my hands than usual, from the illness of my housekeeper, and the desertion of Charlotte ; the pretty innocent Charlotte, who would have thought her destitute of love and gratitude ? whom I looked upon as quite settled in my family, and often considered of her future advantage, though her present profits were not as great as I find she expected ; but they should have been more had she expressed the least uneasiness, which she never did. Alas ! where shall we find Pamela ? I have  
bred



bred up two young women, and engaged with others : interest and low thoughts engrossed them all ; but I will not be discouraged where I have the least hope of doing good.

Mr. Dewes joins in my best wishes to you, Mrs. Richardson, and all your family, but particularly our friend Miss Patty, for whom all my house have true affection ; and if she liked Welsbourn well enough to make us another visit, we shall always be sincerely glad to see her : but I hope to talk over this and many other things with you soon, which will be an inexpressible satisfaction to,

Sir, your most faithful,

and obliged humble servant,

A. DEWES.

TO



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Welsbourn, May 31, 1755.*

I THINK I must chide my good Mr. Richardson for running away the last morning I had the pleasure of seeing him, without letting me speak to him again: he may alledge I left him; but while Mr. M. was relating that tedious story (with which I knew I should be tired about Warwickshire), I could not enjoy the brighter, more desirable thoughts and words of our truly valued friend; I therefore went up stairs to a poor tradesman that had been waiting an hour for me, and to my great mortification, when I came down, found you were gone.

It is a great satisfaction to me that I have seen your agreeable house at Parson's Green, for now I can visit you in imagination, see all the entertaining employments of your happy, worthy family, and observe the joy that sparkles in their eyes when approved  
of



of by their most excellent parents; and I can know the just and ingenious sentiments of the young recluse, without offending her too great modesty and reserve. I own I wish to be better acquainted with Miss Nancy, for never did eyes discover more sensibility and sweetness than her's do. My spirits sink at the thoughts of my sister's leaving England soon; I shall have very little more of her company before she goes; it is very little of her conversation I now enjoy, to what I was blessed with before one of the fairest flowers of this kingdom was transplanted to a foreign soil. It makes me look more strongly to that happy place where there will be no separation of friends, in which sentiment Dr. Young so charmingly strengthens us, when he says, "What a poor broken embrace, what a sad fragment of friendship is that which ends at the grave."

I hope your neighbour at Fulham is well. I wish I could command some of her talents, to make this letter worth your reading; and

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considering you in the high and revered character of the author of Sir Charles Grandison, &c. I could not venture to write at all; but recollecting the kind condescension that makes you excuse the low capacities of all you converse with, I cannot resist the pleasure it is to me to acknowledge myself, dear Sir,

Your faithful friend,

and obliged humble servant,

A. DEWES.

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TO MRS. DEWES.

*London, June 4, 1755.*

WOULD my dear Mrs. Dewes chide me for my unhappiness in not having an opportunity, tho' in the same house with her, of taking leave of her on her setting out for Warwickshire? The gentleman, with his long story, kept me longer than I could have stayed with convenience. I told you, Madam,



dam, that I was obliged soon to go. Your dear sister was charmingly employed with her pencil; and after I had stayed a good while, and you did not return, I desired my compliments and best wishes to you. The dear lady was too much engaged to offer to send up to you; I concluded you were busy, and went away reluctantly, at not having an opportunity to take my leave of you. I say not this to lay the least blame on your excellent sister, but to exculpate myself.

I hoped, dear Madam, to have had the pleasure of a whole day at Parson's-Green, with the most respectable party you mention as having designed me that favour. But had you and they been in town a twelve-month, it would, I see, have been very difficult to have obtained that favour. I never knew ladies so much engaged as the two worthy sisters I have in my eye and in my heart: no great wonder, so universally beloved and esteemed as they are. But I, who have not my time so much at command as I

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could



could wish, never attempted a visit to either of you, that I could be quite easy and free, because of those hurries and engagements in which (*if at home*) I always found you both (ever desirous to oblige your friends) shall I, for want of a better word, say turmoiled? And altho' my vanity would not allow me to think my visits quite undesirable (tho' they always had the appearance to me of being unseasonable) I trod the ground back from you with more pleasure than I approached you, greatly as I respected you both, because I assured myself I left you more free to pursue your pre-engagements. I hardly ever wished to enjoy a pleasure that was to be a pain to my friends.

But tell me, Madam, was the steady, the serene, Mr. Dewes always so hurried? Did not his business lead him *once* near Salisbury-court, in these two last visits to town? I call not this good gentleman steady and serene, in opposition to the characters of ladies so dear to me; they would be entitled to



to the *same* distinctions, were it possible for the general admiration which they so deservedly attract, to allow them to be the mistresses of their own time. But thus far I can account for Mr. Dewes: he was not so long in town either time as you ladies were; and then it is impossible that the hurries of ladies so much admired and engaged, should not in some measure communicate themselves to all who have the honour and happiness of connections with them—even, as I have seen, to the very servants.

It cannot be so at Welsbourn and Delville. Would to heaven that I could have the happiness of attending you in turn at those places! I would be glad to compound for the power of being able to look in upon you at Welsbourn, when the Dean, and his lady, and Miss Mulso, and Miss Prescott, shall be with you, tho' it were but for one hour, at your tea-table.

You do my Nancy great honour, in wishing to have been better acquainted with her;



she is, indeed, a good girl, and I hope not entirely unworthy of the distinction where-with you and Dr. Delany favoured her: he had the goodness to be pleased with her. She has more ear than tongue. I wish she would be a little less reserved, when she finds herself called upon, and encouraged; but it is a fault on the right side in young people. There is a time, it is that of *youth*, for treasuring up knowledge, in order the more freely, when *at maturity*, to pour it forth to their juniors. Pride, conceit, pertness, will be best kept down by shutting the mouth and opening the ears, and the character of such a person will be continually establishing itself, till it arrives at its shining time, if ever it can shine. How much more creditable is it to a young woman, to have it said, that she talks too little, than that she prates too much? I, who observe upon the natural tempers of my children, can see, that Nancy, with all her silent meekness, wants not a consciousness, that she is somewhat more than



than a quite common girl, and if she were to give way to this consciousness, perhaps her character would not be advantaged by it. Besides, is not knowledge obtained by hearing rather than by speaking? What we know, we know. Another may be informed of our sentiments; we should not therefore, at a proper age, be too reserved—and we may be flint and steel to each other: but still the ductile mind will seek to improve itself by the observations and sentiments of its friend, the rather, as no two persons think exactly alike upon even the same subject. Yet reserve, upon proper calls, from proper persons, is a fault; but, as I said, a fault on the right side, especially in so forward an age as that in which we live. But no more on a subject so grave, and so relative to a child of my own.

How sensibly, how justly do you regret that you shall have but a short visit from your excellent sister and the Dean, in the approaching one they will make at Welsbourn. But if you were always to live upon one spot,



tho' your satisfaction might be greater, yet your joys would be less. The most exquisite of our joys, respecting this life, arise from these hopes, and the meetings which consummate them, and which could not be so exquisite, but for the previous absence. After a few hours presence we can go on more sedately, in telling each other what has happened to each in absence, and can, after a little while, make what has happened to more distant friends, their virtues or their follies, the subject of our entertainment, and probably *necessary* helps to discourse; when, perhaps, before the meeting, we imagined we could talk for ever on the most tender subjects, without suffering the intervention of more indifferent ones for an hour in a week.

“One of the fairest flowers of this kingdom transplanted to a foreign soil!” How prettily is your regret expressed! “One of the fairest flowers in this kingdom”—how justly! But

Shall nought but thistles in one climate grow?  
And, intermingling, no sweet roses blow.

Is



Is there any climate in which this transplanted flower would not bloom and flourish, and which it would not adorn? And ought we to call that a *foreign* soil which is so near us, that it is united to us by a few hours sail, and which is under the dominion of the same prince, and, as may be said, governed by the same laws?

I am, Madam,

Your most faithful and

affectionate humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR RICHARDSON.

*Welsbourn, Nov. 29th, 1755.*

“HOW shall I plead my cause, when you, my judge, already have condemned me?”

If I say the reason of being so long without answering the favour of my good Mr. Rich-



ardson's last letter, is a constant *hurry* of company, and moving from home to Cheltenham; from thence to Bath, you will not allow my plea, as you are so severe (may I not say cruelly severe?) upon two friends who value and esteem you so much, and who would willingly give up any, or all the *hurries* you ever saw them in, to enjoy the benefit and pleasure of your company; but the custom and fashion of the world must, in some degree, be complied with, and where there is an extensive alliance, and large acquaintance, every one will claim some part of our time and friendship: and need I put the candid, the humane Mr. Richardson, in mind, that six weeks only past in London, once in two or three years, must unavoidably be attended with a multiplicity of affairs, even of real business, besides what form and civility occasion. And can you really think your visits ever unseasonable? They were not only a delight, but a distinction, as "the friendship of a good man (and such a man) is a credit to

to



to every one whom he honours with it ;” therefore, our vanity, as well as taste (if we have any) must be gratified by those visits you are so unkind to think *troublesome*, and *from which you returned with more pleasure than you went*. But I hope I need not say much more upon this subject (which has given me real concern), and that you will allow, that my good friend has not considered it with his usual candour, and will give me the satisfaction of knowing soon, that he does the justice to my friendship it deserves—and I must add, my judgment and taste also, for you have arraigned both ; and tho’ in many cases they may be called in question, in this they cannot. I will bring my *steady*, my *sedate* Mr. Dewes to witness for me, how much I value and admire every thought, word, and work, of Mr. Richardson’s; and must also answer for Mr. Dewes’s esteem, however he was hindered shewing of it, in visiting all the good and worthy family in Salisbury-court.

What you say of the sweetly modest, and



engaging Miss Nancy, and of young people's silence and diffidence, may be in a great degree true; but I should imagine, that without giving their own sentiments, and speaking their opinion upon proper occasions, neither themselves or friends can know whether they apprehend and judge rightly of what they hear; for, I suppose, information must be acquired by speaking as well as hearing; tho' I would not for the world have my daughter pert, and her great liveliness of spirits gives me fears, and will make me consider much upon that point, in which, as well as every other, I shall always rejoice to receive your opinion and sentiments.

By the time you receive this, you will have seen (I hope) your grateful and affectionate daughter, Sally Chapone, who was overjoyed at the thoughts of seeing your truly loved and honoured family. Nothing can be so great a consolation to her, in her late heavy affliction, which she bore like a Christian, tho' she felt it as the tenderest sister and friend.



friend. She will give you some account of my late steps and adventures, which I cannot be so unreasonable to mention now, having made this letter so unreasonably long already. I hope my sister will soon have the pleasure of seeing you. I never shewed her your last letter. I hope you will recant to me part of it, to satisfy,

Dear Sir,

Your most faithful and

obliged humble servant,

A. DEWES.

I made a little acquaintance with Mrs. Fielding—like her very much—believe she would be a charming winter companion—and wish for her to be a Mrs. Teachum to Mary. I beg my kind wishes to her.

TO



TO MRS. DEWES.

*London, Dec. 15th, 1756.*

I ATTEMPTED not to write to my dear and good Mrs. Dewes, who, the last summer, was so much from her sweet Welsbourn, till I knew she was returned and settled, for I presumptuously hoped for the favour she has now done me: most cordially do I now thank you for it.

I rejoice to hear of the health and welfare of all your family, and hope that your summer excursions have been of service to your own. It must have been so—for was not much of your time past with the excellent sister of your mind?

I believe Miss M., Miss P., and that more than agreeable set of friends, and we, love one another as well as ever; I can answer, I am sure, for our side; but we meet not near so often as we used to do. The pen and ink  
seems



seems to have furnished the cement of our more intimate friendship ; and that being over with me, as to writing any more for the public, the occasion of the endearment ceases. If this be not the cause of the distance, I know not to what to impute it, for I, and all mine, love them dearly ; and whenever we see them, let them know that we do. But I will, next time I have the pleasure of seeing them, which I hope will be soon, acquaint them with your kind regards.

Miss Sutton, you say, intends to stay in Norfolk till March next. Then, I suppose, to come to town for the summer. How unaccountable are young ladies, who have not the blessing of a *controlling*, or perhaps it would be better said, of a *persuading* husband!

You see, Madam, that I have owned the laying down of my pen. Advanced years, increasing infirmities, my domestic concerns, call upon me to quit it. And have I not written a monstrous quantity ; nineteen or twenty close written volumes ? And for what ?



what? To propagate, instead of virtue, theft, robbery, and abuse, from the wild Irish, and to be forced to defend a property all my own; that is to say, neither a compilation, nor borrowed from any body. Good people may approve the morality of my writings. But good people want not such for themselves; and what bad ones have they converted?

Dr. Young is very well. He is about to give the world a collection of his works, at the entreaty of booksellers, who have a property in them, in four twelves volumes. His Love of Fame, the universal passion, if the world were to be cured of its follies by Satires would be read to good purpose.

We have at present a very sick family at Parson's-Green, which is likely to detain us there longer than usual; two dear friends, a worthy Mr. Edwards, who came to us as a guest for a few weeks, and good Miss Dutton, who are but too likely to breathe their last there, and perhaps in a few weeks, if not days. My wife (God reward  
the



the dear creature for all her tender and sisterly regards to her two suffering friends) has got a bad cold. Sally, our youngest girl, is confined with a rheumatic disorder. Suky, our niece, has been some days in the same way. Two nurses, and the daughter of one of them, besides Mr. Edwards's tender servant, in the house. But why do I trouble you with so melancholy a detail?

Our Nancy, of whose health you so kindly enquire, has been for some months with a most excellent lady, and I think one of the most perfect women, as a Christian, an economist, a wife, mother, mistress, friend, and neighbour, that I know and have heard of, a Mrs. Watts, of Westhamber, in Somersetshire, who is very fond of the good girl; she will winter with her; and I bless God, she is better in health than she has been for some years past: we are delighted with the advantages she will most probably reap from such an exemplary lady.

Repeatedly I beg blessings on you and  
yours.



yours. My wife, and all mine, join with me  
in best respects to good Mr. Dewes and you.

I am, Madam,

Your faithful and affectionate

humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Mount Panther, Aug. 19th, 1751.*

YOUR friends here, good Sir, are truly  
touched with the very indifferent account  
you give of your own health and Miss Rich-  
ardson's; our dear Sally is in great distress  
about you, and we all endeavour to persuade  
one another that the next account will be  
better; our very affectionate wishes attend  
you that they may, with our kindest to all.

No one that has had the pleasure of a par-  
ticular correspondence with Mr. Richardson,  
can



can give it up without regret; such a mark of your friendship, and such an opportunity of improvement are too valuable, not to lament the loss of them.

We had a very pleasant journey to this place. Miss Chapone's surprise at some of the wild parts we past through, and her quick observation of all the pretty scenes, was very entertaining to us. I think it is impossible to travel any way in Ireland, and observe how very pretty the face of nature is, without grieving it should not be more improved. The hospitality that reigns here, would persuade any stranger that it was impossible it should be supported without the country's having every advantage that could contribute towards it; but indeed that is not the case, tho' I hope it will be, as there are gentlemen in this neighbourhood who seem determined to do that justice to their country which hath been so long neglected. I must leave it to your judgment to have my enamelled pictures advertised as often as you think



think necessary. I hope your neighbour, Mrs. Donnellan, is better than when I left her. After the blessing I have received in the happy conclusion of our law-suit, I ought not to repine at any thing : but I cannot think of the distance between me and some very dear friends, without feeling a pang like that of parting. I run on, without considering that nothing can be worse for bad nerves than a very dull letter. It is your own fault—why did you encourage me? Pray let me know how Dr. Young does, and where he is, and be so good to tell him my constant good wishes attend him.

I am, Sir,

Your most obliged

and faithful humble servant,

M. DELANY.

TO



TO MRS. DELANY.

*London, Sept. 11th, 1758.*

THANK you, dear Madam, I thank the Dean, and my dear Miss Chapone, for your kind solicitude and good wishes for my health. My appetite, which had left me, seems half inclined to return; and would refreshing rest befriend me, which it has not done for many months, perhaps these paralytic tremors, which have greatly increased upon me, would abate, and now and then enable me to hold a pen, on my promise to it not to trespass upon it so immoderately as formerly. But however that be, let patience and resignation be all my prayer.

I have a high notion of the natural beauties and advantages of Ireland, and should have been delighted, I am sure, had I been present, with Miss Chapone's observations and agreeable surprise at what she beheld as she travelled



travelled from sweet Delville to the more savage sounding Mount Panther. I rejoice to hear of the spirit of improvement that has gone out in a land so very capable of it. I wish English politics would—But who knows what a spirit may arise? O that we and you were more one people than we are!

Dr. Young is finely recovered, and, if I *guess* right, will one day oblige the world with a small piece on Original Writing and Writers. I will be careful to mention to him your kind enquiries after his health, and your good wishes. He is at Wellwyn.

I can very easily account for your friendly and benevolent sensation, like that of parting, which the distance from those you love gives you. But this sensation will always attend you wherever you go; and it ought, since every body that knows Mrs. Delany equally loves and admires her; and she cannot but be grateful. God be praised for the righteous decision which has made all your journeyings, your visits, your reflections happy!

But



But what see I in the next passage? Can it be Mrs. Delany? I do not hold it excusable to make ladies blush. But let me try to transcribe it, in hopes of some such effect from it. “I run on (says somebody) without considering, that nothing can be worse for bad nerves than a very dull letter. It is your own fault—why did you encourage me?” Let me hasten to a conclusion, since I may, more justly, fear the length of mine; thank you, Madam, for your hint. My respectful compliments to the Dean, to Miss Chapone, to your dear self, and conclude me,

Madam,

Your most faithful and

obedient servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

TO



TO MISS SUTTON.

*August 20, 1750.*

MOST heartily do I thank good Miss Sutton for the honour she has done me, I hope not uncheerfully done me; because, if so, and were I to know it, I should hardly be able to forgive myself for my earnestness to obtain the favour.

You attribute indeed your reluctance to diffidence only, and this gives me some ease; but with how little reason do you make that plea.

You are not, nor ever will, I hope, be called to half the occasions that Clarissa had to shew her reasoning powers; nor could you be a Miss Howe, I am sure, who shines from a foil, and seldom does without one. True genius wants not one to set itself off. Miss Howe, though I love her dearly, dazzles most when she takes liberties she should not take; and



and neither her lover, nor my mother, escapes her, when the vein is opened. Miss Howe is a true modern wit, who thinks it not necessary, when it carries the keenest edge, to retain discretion in its service.

But, Madam, when you love writing as well as Clarissa and Miss Howe loved it; when you have been long fond of taking every occasion that offers to communicate your thoughts to an absent friend, your diffidence will lessen; but when, as is apparent, you are blessed with the talent, yet decline the pen, because you will not cultivate that talent, what shall we say to that?

Your dear and good friend, who has so many opportunities of knowing your attainments and excellencies, must have often told you (I am sure of it, from the single specimen before me) how little occasion you have for diffidence. Still less have you occasion for it in doing me the honour of your correspondence, as I am one of the plainest and least accurate persons that ever took up a



pen, and who have nothing but *heart* to recommend me; and, when I follow not my correspondent's lead, write whatever, at the moment, comes uppermost, trusting to that heart, and regarding not head. Witness the present writing, and what I have had the honour to write to your dear friend.

I should not despair of considerable aids from a young lady of your qualifications and genius, were I to have leisure and health to pursue the subjects I am so urgently desired by many persons to pursue. Admirably do you observe "that defects strike, and are easily remarked, when it is not easy to draw perfections; and that a tolerable critic may make but an indifferent author." But I will not allow that Miss Sutton, who is in the polite world, and has moreover a solidity of mind, that few of her sex are possessed with at twice her age, shall class herself with those women who are accused of not knowing their own minds; nor will I, Madam, easily allow, that this is a characteristic of the sex.

Ladies



Ladies who too readily give up to a general reflection upon their sex, encourage railers of ours who have not perhaps one signal virtue to distinguish themselves by, and who have as little steadiness as the most unsteady of the sex they are so ill-manneredly free with.

You must not, Madam, therefore be a sufferer for your modesty; and I am sure of this, that though your natural diffidence will not let you tell me what you would have the agreeable man be in every light, yet you can tell me what you would not have him to be in any, and every thing you give will be worthy of observation.

You are very good in enquiring after my little girl. She is much as she was; but I have lost a brother, a good-natured, not unworthy, but not happy man, who has left six children, five of them girls, only one of which is provided for, and at present am engaged in sharing with another brother the care of the five. I mention this, because my wax might give so kind an enquirist a curiosity to know whe-



ther the losing of the little girl she had seen gave occasion for it.

May you be as happy, Madam, as I wish you to be; you will then be very happy. What a charming circumstance it is, I often say to young unmarried ladies, that they have, morally speaking, their happiness in their own power. Blessed with such a companion, friend, adviser, as Mrs. Donnellan, and with such fine qualities as your own, you must be happy, which Heaven grant to the wishes of,

Madam,

Your greatly obliged

and most obedient servant,

S. RICHARDSON.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*September 25, 1750.*

SIR,

THOUGH you say many obliging things to encourage me, I think I know you and myself too well not to have some degree of fear in writing to you, from which your less regarding the head than the heart does not relieve me; for the best quality I am conscious of in mine, sincerity, constrains me to own, that I more dread your censure for want of delicacy in my sentiments themselves, than in the manner of expressing them; a fault that surely must appear unpardonable to you, and greatly lower your opinion of the person guilty of it; and I would therefore fain avoid betraying it, as I may do in treating of the subject proposed.

But I find I shall be insensibly drawn in by my desire to comply with yours, to go

G 3

farther



farther than I intended, and confess that I believe (as Mrs. Donnellan has already with her usual judiciousness remarked) the idea of a perfect man has been greatly defaced by the scarcity of examples in these later ages; and that the improbability of making them good, has induced the ladies to contract their pretensions too much. I don't doubt but if they could be all brought to join in the design, a reformation might in some measure be effected; and no method is more likely to persuade, than convincing them by such arguments as in *Clarissa*, how conducive it would be to their happiness; but then, in the mean time, each particular is apt to think she can do nothing alone towards stemming the torrent, and so they suffer themselves to be borne away by it.

I acknowledge I was too ready to accuse the whole sex, by way of excusing myself; but even that motive should not have prevailed on me to do it to any body less a friend to us; and your observations on the  
ill



ill consequences of the practice confirm my resolution against it, and have given me a hint, that one indispensable qualification of a gentleman is, a freedom from those unreasonable and impertinent notions some men affect to have of women in general.

A man who pretends to exempt one woman on account of some extraordinary perfections, if he once comes to think less highly of them, will, to punish her for the imagined imposition, have a worse opinion of her than of any other.

You suppose very rightly, that the colour of your seal might alarm me, and I was glad to be informed of the occasion of it; which, though I heartily condole with you on it, does not give me the concern I should have felt for my young friend. The care of such a family is a heavy charge, but will seem lighter to a person who is sensible, as you are, of the pleasure of doing good, than it would to any other; and I can't but rejoice,  
G 4 that



that the children's misfortune is alleviated by falling into such good hands.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

AL. SUTTON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*October the 26th, 1751.*

DEAR SIR,

AFTER so long a silence, how shall I begin? What shall I say for myself? Nothing that I can say will excuse it; and if your goodness does not, I must bear the severe punishment of your being justly angry with me.

I have given you room to suppose a thousand things of me; one of which, in particular, I should be extremely sorry to have you believe, though I have not endeavoured to prevent it, that I am capable of forgetting  
your



your friendship, or growing indifferent; but I assure you, so far from it, you are often in my thoughts, and I boast of it to a number of your admirers in this country, who envy my happiness.

Another thing that I am solicitous to undeceive you about, is the notion that you may perhaps (after what has been said on the subject) have formed, of my being taken up with a passion that is apt to engross the whole mind of those possessed by it; but this neither I assure you has been the case, nor will there, I sincerely believe, ever be any of that sort between a certain gentleman and me.

What has hindered me from doing almost every thing I ought, has been the continual hurry I have lived in ever since I came here; the neighbourhood is extensive, and very sociable, so that we are daily receiving or paying visits, and three times this week have come home in the morning. I have besides been three times out for several days at a

G 5

time.



time. You can't imagine how this racketing discomposes my indolence.

My brother has been with us this fortnight, which has made me very happy, though less so than if we had been together in any other place where we could converse without so much interruption. He is now gone with his cousin Robert to visit another cousin for a few days; so Miss Nancy and I are left alone, and make use of this interval of quiet to enquire after our absent friends.

I ought not barely to mention her, without doing justice to her merit. We have formerly talked of her; but I must add to whatever I may have said, that a nearer acquaintance has discovered to me new perfections in her. When we meet I will give you her character at large; and I hope to introduce you to one another, for she has some thoughts of going to town this winter.

For fear you should think my silence affected, I will say something of her brother, though I can't say so much for him: he is  
a good



a good sort of young man, as men go; that is, he has several good qualities, but is rather more in the common way of the world than I think is right; in short, he is not Sir Charles Grandison.

Ah! Mr. Richardson, that Sir Charles puts one sadly out of conceit with the ordinary kind of people one meets with; indeed you should not tantalize one with such a pattern, unless you intend to make two or three dozen men by it for the use of your friends, whose tastes you have spoiled. I long to hear how he and the dear Harriet go on.

I am expecting with great impatience the news of Mrs. Donnellan's landing; not that I apprehend her to have been in any danger, but I fear she has had a tedious waiting for a wind at Chester; for she wrote me word a month ago, that she was on the point of setting out for that place, and that as soon as she got to Delville, either she or Mrs. Delany would let me know it, which they have not done yet.



I hope all your good family are well, particularly the sweet Miss Nancy, my first acquaintance of them. I beg my best compliments and sincere good wishes to them all, and Miss Chapman; and am dear Mr. Richardson's

Most faithful friend,  
and obliged humble servant,  
AL. SUTTON.

If you favour me with a letter, direct to me by my christian name, but don't hurt yourself to write. I hope your nerves are better.

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TO MISS SUTTON.

*November 7, 1751.*

INDEED, my dear and good Miss Sutton, I did think myself quite forgotten! These abominable racketings! Must they be wherever ladies are? But you have made me great amends, and I thank you.

Poor



Poor Harriet! She is in a despairing way: she would not be easy till she had got out the secret of Sir Charles's past life; and behold! a lady in Italy, (some say of greater excellencies than she, even Harriet, can boast of, absolutely out of her mind for him!) Sir Charles not happy! Harriet unhappy! What has she to do but, *re infectâ*, to go down to Nottinghamshire? I think I ought to have done with these girls, for I have puzzled myself (my business and interruptions contributing), and know not what to do with them; yet, for the honour of the sex, how can I forbear making many women admire a good man?

Strange work, I will only add, among them. I want you, and our other dear friend, to advise with. I believe Harriet too wants to appeal to you against a Clementina, whom, however, she cannot but pity and advise.

You and Mrs. D. will like the new girl, I believe, because she keeps her love a secret, till it overturns her reason. Strange work  
have



have I made with your's and Mrs. D.'s verses from Milton, of Eve's prudery, and with Shakespeare's charming description of the lady with her concealed love; but this is but amusing you.

Don't you begin to think of changing the scenes of racketing? The country was formerly the seat of retirement, and the delight of the Muses; but where now can the poor Muses thrust their heads, now especially that Miss S. and Mrs. D. are separated? And Miss S.'s acknowledged indolence cannot protect her from the universal love of racketing.

You give me great pleasure in the new acquaintance you are so good as to promise me. You must procure me a further knowledge of your brother: he was the subject of a good deal of conversation between young Mr. Onslow and me last Tuesday. Mr. Onslow very much admires him.

My wife and my girls, and Miss Chapone, desire their most particular respects to their  
dear



dear Miss Sutton; and Nancy made a voluntary curtsey, as if you were present, when I mentioned your kind remembrance of her; she says she loves you dearly. She is much as she was when you saw her last.

As to the gentleman—And so you *think*, nay, you *sincerely believe*—But why *sincerely believe*? If Miss Sutton believes, it must be sincerely. When ladies who understand the force of words, and write so well as Miss S. does, use superfluous words, or rather write so, as to lead one to think that they suppose a particular strength of expression necessary on certain subjects. Well, but I thank you Madam, for your condescension in entering upon the subject at all. I can tell you that a certain gentleman, who is your very great admirer, never sees me; but yet, why should I give you curiosity? Indolent ladies have no curiosity.—God preserve you, my dear and good Miss Sutton, prays

Your very great admirer,  
and affectionate humble servant,  
S. RICHARDSON.



TO MISS 'SUTTON.

*July 24, 1752.*

I WAS afraid my dear Miss Sutton had quite forgotten me. This naughty, naughty cousin of hers, thought I, has set her the example; but it was with great pleasure that I found my fears groundless; and you, what I ever thought you to be, good and gracious.

Have you not been half a year gone? Have you not a few days, when you return, to throw away upon the lowest of all your servants? You know how he and all his love you.

A very great admirer of yours, lately married, inquired, in a more affectionate manner than he would have dared to do had he been a single man, after your health. Would to Heaven, said he, she were happily married! I wish so too, thought I to myself; in these racketing times I wish all good girls in that state.

You do me very great honour in one paragraph



graph in your letter, that I hardly know how sufficiently to thank you for; so great, that it would be, such is my veneration for you, arrogance to claim, or more particularly point to it.

I have had two letters from Miss Mulso, admirable ones. She particularly commends herself to your favour. I have threatened her with a melancholy ending of my story. O how she raves! almost execrates me! I want to shew you fresh instances of her admirable genius, though against myself; and I want to let you see Greville just ready with his dagger; but I will say no more. What scenes of distress might be painted! but did I not say, I would not proceed on this subject? Miss Sutton, Mrs. Donnellan, Miss Mulso, &c. &c. should not leave me to myself; I, who must be supposed to be tainted with melancholy, from my own maladies; from my poor Nancy's increasing disorders, (who is now at Southampton, fruitlessly!) my good wife and Sally not well, though



though I hope now mending; can I, forsaken by my better geniuses, (who may be *all* turned racketers, as far as I know,) presume to draw pictures of joy and festivity?

Miss Chapone is still with us, and appears every day more and more amiable to every one who sees and converses with her.

My respectful compliments attend your brother. I am glad you have his company with you, because I know how much you love each other.

Believe me to be, my good Miss Sutton, with equal respect and affection,

Your most faithful

and obedient servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

Dear Lady! help me to a racketing conversation: I greatly want it.



TO MISS SUTTON.

July 10, 1753.

“**T**O-MORROW set out for Yorkshire!”  
“thought I was gone a jaunt!”—unhappy me! But one comfort remains: Yorkshire is not so far off South Audley-street, as any where of the City side of Temple-bar! and must dear Miss Sutton leave me for months, and I be deprived of the honour of taking personal leave of her? It must be so! I have been for a week engaged to be at Enfield this day and to-morrow. Sir Charles Grandison says “that the busiest people in the world are those who have nothing to do!” The beginning of *last* week it was, that I called at Miss Sutton’s house; at the beginning of the *next* I am informed, that on Wednesday she puts wings to her shoulders! O that some Sir Charles would pin you down to some happy spot, and take the gad-fly from your cap! How unsettled is a woman  
that



that is not settled!—*Yorkshire* at last! Good Lord! not to make interest, I hope, for Sir G. S. on his candidateship there! But wherever you go, happiness attend you! Is Miss Anne Sutton of your party? Young ladies! how my heart would ache for the *incipient* rackets, were the men of our day *Love-laces*! not that I should fear so much their attempts on the ladies I have in my eye, as their affronts. Drones of the present age, they have neither brains nor stings!

Once more, all happiness attend my dear Miss Sutton, prays

Her ever devoted

S. RICHARDSON.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Tuesday, 1753.*

DEAR SIR,

I AM extremely sorry I can't have the pleasure of seeing you, and giving you an account of my schemes by word of mouth; but since I am so unlucky, and you seem to be curious about them, I must take this way of informing you, that I don't go to Yorkshire on purpose to make interest for Sir G. S. though I should be very glad I could do it by the way, but to make his sister, Lady Scarborough, a visit, and meet Miss Anne Sutton, who is with her already; and then she and I shall proceed together to a retirement, where I hope to pass several months. From thence I flatter myself I shall bring her with me to town; and if you would be so good



good as to provide two Sir Charles Grandisons against we come, it will oblige us very much, and, if possible, add to the pleasure we shall have in seeing you.

I am, dear Sir, notwithstanding your  
fleers,

Your's, &c.

AL. SUTTON.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Feb. 5, 1756.*

I KNOW that the benevolence of Mr. Richardson's heart is equalled by the goodness of his head, and that he never suffers a partial kindness for his favourite and patronized part of the creation, to influence a judgment the most candid, and at the same time, the nicest in the world, otherwise I should much fear his good-natured indulgence towards the efforts of a very young girl, had induced him to regard too favourably a woman near twice her age, who does not now look upon herself as the same person.

I think, vanity under a shew of modesty, is, of all the lights it can appear in, the most contemptible. How ridiculous then would it be in me to say, I don't think the novel \* worth printing, after it has had your appro-

\* Sidney Biddulph.

bation ?



bation? Before it was honoured with that, I looked upon it as a thing wrote in a manner so different from the present taste, that I did not suppose any body would read it. But I will not presume to make objections, and since you think it ought not to lie by as mere waste paper, I shall gladly commit it to your hand to be disposed of as you think proper. I wish Miss Patty would be so good as to file it a little for me, for I see, upon looking over it, that it wants a great deal of polishing; but I believe you have so much better employment for her, that this would be an improper request. Pray make my compliments to Mrs. Richardson and the young ladies. Mr. Sheridan's best wishes attend you and all your family, as well as those of, Sir,

Your obliged and

obedient servant,

FRA. SHERIDAN.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Dublin, Nov. 20th, 1756.*

A MONTH in Dublin without writing to Mr. Richardson, and that too after so kind, so condescending an invitation on his part! Dear Sir, don't fancy either Mr. Sheridan or I will be so vain as to set about making an apology for this omission. If a starved creature were invited to a banquet, and happened to outstay his time, nobody would expect excuses from him, or if he attempted to make any, would not some one stop him short, and, with a smile of pity, ask the poor wretch what unforeseen misfortune had detained him? Suffer me to make the application, and instead of apologizing, to lament our situation, that has thus long debarred us from the rich repast which a letter from you would have afforded us.

The truth is, since our arrival here, Mr. Sheridan has not had one single hour unemployed,



ployed, in very necessary, tho' very disagreeable, business. Perhaps your goodness may ask me what I have been doing. Why, to answer you truly, I have had my share too. But I dare not enlarge on these particulars, for fear of falling into the error I disclaimed at my first setting out. Let me hasten then to tell you something of our present system of theatrical and domestic affairs.

Mr. Sheridan, on his return, found he had a more formidable enemy to combat against than any that had ever yet attacked him—an enemy neither to be repelled by force, nor overcome by stratagem, and yet an enemy that he was obliged to enter the lists with—and this was no other than a very poor, and almost depopulated town, for such is Dublin at present. He has, however, been too well used to difficulties to let this wholly dishearten him, and he reassumed the reins of government in his little theatrical kingdom with great alacrity of spirit. Having reformed many things in his own territories, he



he thought it most prudent, before he again launched out into a troubled sea, to conciliate the minds of the few remaining malecontents; for this purpose, on his first appearance, he made a short speech to the audience, wherein, in very few words, he modestly vindicated himself from the imputation of ever having intended to give public offence. As this was the utmost that was desired by any one, and more than was expected by all, they would scarce permit him to finish what he had to say, and indeed one half of it was drowned in their clamorous approbation. I believe almost every body, of any fashion, that was left in town, was at the theatre that night, and I find fully verified that wise saying, "A word spoken in season, how good is it." Since that, we have gone on with great peace and tranquillity. The people are very glad to have their entertainment restored to them, and only want to be a little richer to purchase it cheerfully every night; but this circumstance, calamitous



tous as it is in general, gives us an advantage, in regard to the theatre, for I never remember to have seen such constant genteel audiences ; but the cause is too melancholy a one for the effects to produce any pleasure, and it will call up all Mr. Sheridan's attention and diligence to get through so unfavourable a season with any tolerable advantage.

As for my own little family, the joy of seeing them again has been embittered by the illness of my two youngest children ; they have both had fevers, and are but now recovering. Our present abode we find, on many accounts, so inconvenient, and in an air so very confined, that we have been looking out for a little retreat, where the children and I may breathe more freely, and Mr. Sheridan be more master of his time ; such a portion of it I mean as he is not unavoidably obliged to pass in Dublin. We have at last fixed on a little place in the neighbourhood of the Dean of Down's villa, to which I believe



lieve we shall remove next week, and here Mr. Sheridan hopes to find time himself to tell you how much he esteems, how much he honours you; mean while he commissions me to say thus much for him.

I have troubled you with trifling particulars, but I know the worthy heart I write to interests itself even in the trifling concerns of those it vouchsafes to approve.

Pray, Sir, tell good Mrs. Richardson that I love her for her own sake, as much as I do for yours; take that Sir, Miss Richardson, Miss Patty, Miss Nancy, and Miss Sally, have all a just claim to my warmest affections, and they have it. Charles talks of Parson's Green every day, and is a sincere and constant lover of your whole family; indeed I should disown him if he were not. Be pleased, Sir, when you see Mr. Duncombe, to make our compliments to him, and to the amiable Miss Prescott; when I get to my cottage, at Glassnevin, I will do myself the pleasure of writing to them both; I can't



bear the thoughts of being forgotten by persons I value.

Dear Sir, need I tell you with how much affection

I am your obliged and

obedient servant,

FRA. SHERIDAN.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Dublin, Feb. 8th, 1757.*

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE thus long delayed to acknowledge the receipt of your acceptable letter, as Mr. Sheridan would needs claim that agreeable task himself, but in this he is like a great many other folks, who promise things which it is not in their power to perform, and with  
this



this aggravation too, that they hinder others, whose attempts, tho' they might not succeed so advantageously, would yet answer the end proposed as effectually. In short, after many resolutions and fruitless endeavours to get an uninterrupted hour to write to you, he is at length obliged to give it up, and yield me a satisfaction which he found it impossible to enjoy himself. Upon just now looking over your letter, I am startled at the date of it, and am afraid to condole with you on the illness of those worthy friends you mention; if they are recovered, which I hope is the case, it will be ridiculous; if you have lost them, how unseasonable, how impertinent!

I have myself been lately engaged in a melancholy scene; perhaps I should hardly venture to call it so to one of a heart less delicate than Mr. Richardson's. The persons concerned are our particular friends, they are husband and wife, the fondest and the happiest pair I know; the gentleman is major in



one of the regiments here, which is commanded to America. As the order was sudden, he had a severe struggle with himself before he could disclose it to his wife. She has sense and fortitude, but neither were sufficient to support her under the terrible prospect of so near a separation from him. She received the news with agonies, which were succeeded by fainting fits, that had like to have been fatal; there was nothing but tears for several days, in which all her female friends bore her company. Her husband, who adores her, durst scarce venture into the room to her. She is a fine young creature, of the sweetest disposition in the world, and is every way as amiable. She has no near connections here (except an infant on the breast), having not long since lost a very tender mother. I am sure, Sir, *you* will allow me to call this a melancholy scene; I love the people, and feel for them both. But my mind is now more at ease, for I find he resolves to take her with him; we shall lose  
a couple



a couple of dear friends, perhaps, for ever; but the man goes on a glorious errand, and the wife would not think herself unhappy with him in the regions of darkness.

Don't you rejoice with us, dear Sir, I am sure you do, on our Mr. F. having the notice taken of him which his merit deserves? I hope this expedition will be the means of restoring him to his fortune, and greater honours than those he has lost. The mention you made of him in your letter, like an auspicious prophet, anticipated the good news.—God send him success!

You enquire after the Dean of D's affair; I can learn nothing, with any certainty, about it, but am afraid it is not likely to be concluded so soon, nor so happily, as his friends could wish. As for our own affairs (to jump at once from great things to small) they are going on as well as can be expected, considering what Mr. Sheridan has to struggle thro', and with the present addition of a heavy cold, which has hung on him these



three weeks, and which he can't afford himself time to nurse a little; our weather too has been severe to a degree I never remember it since the remarkable frost, in the year 1739; this has brought such distress on the poor as is scarce credible; coals have been raised to almost double what I have some times known them, by a wicked combination of some of the dealers here with those of Whitehaven; and there is now of the coarsest brown bread, little more than eight pounds for a shilling: but I must say, for the honour of my country, and Dublin in particular, there now seems to be the most diffusive spirit of charity exerting itself that ever was known. The excessive cold has kept me for some time past at our quarters in town, as I found the sharp clear air of Glassnevin likely to bring on my old complaint of a rheumatism in my head.

Pray, Sir, say a little about your health when you let us hear from you next. I hope I need not tell you it is remembered at our  
little



little board every day, and it has given me a better opinion than ever I had of many of my acquaintance, to find them so much your admirers; this is one of my great criterions, both of the head and the heart, and I am mightily pleased to find people unanimous in believing you a *good* man, as well as a great genius.

I read that part of your letter to Charles which related to himself; he was affected with it, and the tears started into his little eyes; he charged me to say a great deal to you for him; perhaps if I were to write you a letter of his dictating, it would not be unentertaining to a mind that delights in innocence, and the genuine simplicity of nature.

Commend me affectionately to good Mrs. Richardson, and the dear girls; I embrace them all severally. But what's become of Penny\*? I have heard from her but once since my return to Ireland, and that soon after my

\* Miss Pennington.



arrival: I have wrote to her twice since, and am very uneasy at her silence. Adieu, dear Sir,

I am, with sincere esteem and love,  
your most obedient servant,

FRA. SHERIDAN.

Poor Mr. Sheridan! he is forced to content himself with bidding me assure you of his respect and best wishes for you and yours.

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TO MRS. SHERIDAN.

*London, May 11, 1757.*

MY DEAR MRS. SHERIDAN,

RE-PERUSING your last favour, I am afflicted to find it dated Feb. 8, yet cannot allow you to be displeased with me for so long a silence. I have been struggling with a severe nervous paroxysm, and still, at times, am unable to hold a pen. A heavy winter have  
we



we had. Mr. Edwards, good Mr. Edwards! worthy Miss Dutton! both departed with us at Parson's Green; and since that, excellent Mrs. Watts, at her house in Somersetshire—our poor Nancy was with her. What a loss has that good girl had! We were obliged to hurry her back to us.

I read with delight the character of your worthy pair of military friends; why should she not be classed under that word as well as her husband? Did she not know, when she made a soldier her choice, that she was liable to such sudden calls, and that his country had a title to his services, and even to his love, superior to her own? Yet there are situations that will allow of our pity. I did pity them as I read, and was glad the tender heart was to accompany the gentleman she so dearly loves. Yet the danger and incommodities of the voyage, and the still greater perils he must necessarily encounter, when those are overcome; she, in a strange and savage country—who will deny them both a  
still



still greater share of pity? But these fine girls must run a madding after soldiers, preferably to any other class of men. And these soldierly folks have not pity enough for fine girls, to discourage the too-often romantic preference; tho' the consequences, as we see, are so very *bewailable*. Excellent as this worthy couple are, I verily believe, I should not pity them, yet am of a pitiful nature, were they not your beloved friends: for are they not in their full duty? And tho' they may have been surprized at the sudden call, ought such a call, or one equally disagreeable, to have been unexpected by a military gentleman, or his lady either? God bless them both, however, pray I, and for many happy years preserve them to their friends, and to each other.

What scenes of distress are before us in the general scarcity of grain! The unhappy *poor*! how I pity them in both kingdoms! Yet what greater calamities may be approaching, who can tell? God avert them!

Continue



Continue for us, my dear Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan, your kind remembrances; you cannot for friends more warmly sincere!

Adieu, my dear Mrs. Sheridan, our beloved Mr. Sheridan, our amiable Charles, and all you love! Believe me to be (including the respects of all mine)

Your affectionate and faithful friend,

and humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*July 24th, 1757.*

MANY an hour, my dear Sir, have I resolved to set apart in order to answer the favour of your last letter, and as constantly some impediment has interposed, but I have now, thank my stars, got forty miles from Dublin, that scene of noise and interruption.  
I brought



I brought a severe cold to the country with me, which has attacked me in a variety of forms for more than six weeks past, partly confining me to my bed, but I am now, thank God, getting the better of it; but if it were otherwise, insignificant as I am, why should I complain, when I reflect what havoc sickness and death have made amongst your friends since I saw you last? Nay, that you yourself are not spared by the one, nor will be by the other: but may that destined day be many, many years (I could almost say ages) off.

I thank you heartily for the epitaph intended for poor Mrs. Watts; I think it an admirable one, if not rather a little too diffusive for the purpose; but the hand of friendship cannot easily check itself when engaged in the praises of an object warmly and deservedly loved. I condole with Miss Nancy on the loss she had of that truly estimable woman. O, Sir, how very few will she find (if she looks out of her own family) fit to supply



supply her place. But a-propos, I have had a long letter from our Penny; but still in the elegiack strain. Mrs. Peckard (who wrote to me much about the same time, and who has a discerning head, as well as a very friendly heart) tells me, she fears all is not well with our poor girl; she says she is much altered. Penny has not yet got over that time of life when the heart, spite of sense and virtue, is liable to weaknesses it does not care to own.

You once observed to me, that you could never get some of your young folks to be as open and ingenuous before you as you could wish. I know Penny loves, as well as esteems and honours you, more than any body, and yet I fear she would not open her heart to you freely; and there is a reason for it in nature (depraved as human nature is). We must fancy a sort of superiority (at least not an inferiority) on our side, in regard to the person we make the confidant of our foibles, in order to strike a sort of balance in  
our



our own favour, lest we should fall too low in the opinion of those we trust. You smile now, and say, right woman, You speak from experience. I do ; but we can speak of our own faults when past, and conscious that we have got the better of them, with the same indifference we do of those of our neighbours, and exult in the reflection, that we can never be guilty of the same again. This way of thinking, in respect to you, Sir, must lock up mouths of almost every body, except those who, by years and experience, have subdued that sense of pride or false shame which I suppose implanted in all our natures, I doubt, indeed, Miss Penny's humility suffers her to carry this too far, even with those to whom she herself is more than equal. When you get her to London, pray bring her to your confessional, and don't spare penance, if you find she deserves it. I would not have that worthy mind enslaved to follies of any species. Nobody, like you, has the art to penetrate into the secrets, and unwind the  
mazes



mazes of a female heart; and if I am not mistaken, you can deal corrosives and lenitives with an even hand, and never err in the application of either. I both scolded and preached in my letter to her, but my entire dependence is on your salutary advice, which, joined to the efforts of her own good heart, will, I am sure, arm her against all mental evils. I long to see her—I long to see you—I long to return to England. I call it returning; that expression, I think, gives me an idea of a sort of home, and such I must consider it, endeared as it is to me by the friendship of some who hold the warmest place in my breast. I hope (what should we do but for that word) that I shall see it next year. Mr. Sheridan wishes to set up his rest there (perhaps next winter may determine that point with us). He is here with me now, and I tell him I will make no more apologies for him. We are in a profound solitude, which one should think would give a man sacred leisure, and yet he contrives to be busy from morn



morn to night, and he is now as much immersed in turf-bogs, and a variety of other country occupations, as he was in Dublin in studies of another nature.

We had the pleasure of Colonel Fraser's company for above a month in town. He has left us his picture at full length, in his highland militaries. We need not such a token to keep him fresh in our memories. But it is so extremely like, I have been some times tempted to speak to it. He and his tall fellows embarked about ten days ago for America. Worthy, amiable man! may he prosper in all his undertakings, for I am sure they will all be to his own honour, as well as that of his country.

I am, dear Sir,  
with sincere respect,  
y<sup>o</sup>ur obliged  
and obedient servant,

FRA. SHERIDAN.

TO



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Dec. 18th, 1757.*

DEAR SIR,

I DID not expect my stay here would have been quite so long, and was in hopes, before this time, to have saluted you in Salisbury-court; but as I cannot tell when I shall have that pleasure, I would no longer defer paying my respects to you even in this cold and distant manner, very, very unequal to the wishes of my heart.

Mr. Sheridan is up to the ears in ink; he is preparing another course of Lectures, compiling an English Grammar, and writing something on the manner of reading the Liturgy. All this together with instructing his boys, fully employ his time, so that he hardly ever allows himself a walk. For my part, I have taken up my residence in the chimney corner, and should lose the use of  
my



my speech, if I did not find pretty constant employment for it with my little ones, for I scarce ever see a mortal besides.

Pray, dear Sir, how does this (to me) uncommonly severe weather agree with you and with my good Miss Richardson? I consider you two as the only invalids of the family, and am the more solicitous about you. I wish I could hear that you had put a design you mentioned to me into act; viz. of getting a carriage to roll about, which, in defiance of frost, should give your blood something a brisker circulation than your study can afford it. The want of such a convenience has put Mr. Sheridan and me upon trying the experiment recommended lately in one of the papers, by Dr. Lob; and we have erected, in our parlour, his machine for muscular exercise. Mr. Sheridan finds it a tolerable succedaneum for riding; but I am ashamed to own myself so lazy as not to be reconciled to it, only for the small objection of its being tiresome, without being pleasant.

I have



I have seen some extracts from the History of the Magdelens, which gives me a curiosity to read the whole. Mr. Sheridan begs that his sincere respects and best wishes may be accepted by you, Mrs. Richardson, and the young ladies, which pray join with those of my beloved.

Sir, your ever obliged  
and most obedient servant,  
FRA. SHERIDAN.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*March 16, 1758.*

LET not my much honoured, much esteemed Mr. Richardson, suppose that my long silence has been owing to neglect, or to a want of setting a just value on a correspondence so kindly offered on his part, and which I should have esteemed as the greatest honour ever conferred on me. No, my good Sir, you are to consider me as an unfortunate  
man,



man, taken prisoner by the Turks in my voyage, and ever since chained to an oar. Indeed the Goths and Vandals of this age have treated me with more than Turkish barbarity, and have kept me in as deplorable a state of slavery. Since my arrival in Ireland I have been so surrounded with difficulties, so involved in a variety of the most disagreeable and perplexing business, that I could find no moments for the comforts and enjoyments of life. Amongst many others, I found myself obliged to give up what I had fondly considered at our parting as a source of the highest pleasure this world could afford, I mean a correspondence with the best man and the greatest genius of the age. I think you know me too well to suspect me of flattery: indeed I speak to you the honest sentiments of my soul. When I was driven from my native country by a most unparalleled act of cruelty and injustice, I made it a matter of consolation to me, that by some lucky chance I might have the happiness of  
being



being admitted into the acquaintance of the wonderful author of *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*. I was not deceived in my hopes. Your benevolence and condescension, in your many acts of kindness to me and mine during my stay in England, filled my heart with the warmest gratitude; and the days which I passed with Mr. Richardson shall, in the calendar of my life, be marked with the whitest lines. Nothing grieved me so much at leaving England, as the impossibility of enjoying any more those happy hours.—However, your condescending offer of conversing with me sometimes by letter, alleviated the regret with which I left London, and the thoughts of that shortened the road to Chester; but how have I been disappointed? I never found myself sufficiently disengaged to attempt writing to you; and I could no more think of appearing before you whilst my mind was disturbed, than I could of going into the royal presence *en deshabillé*. When I tell you that, besides two



laborious employments, sufficient to try the strength of the most active spirit and robust constitution, (which mine, alas! is not,) I have had to encounter all the difficulties that the most malevolent spirit of a wicked faction, and the malice of unprovoked, and therefore unforgiving enemies, could throw in my way; when at the same time I tell you, that I have constantly met with the basest ingratitude from those whom I most obliged, and nothing but treachery from those in whom I most confided, you will easily believe that I have not found one lucid interval from trouble since my arrival in this kingdom. At this very juncture I have more business upon my hands than ever; but as I now descry land, after a tedious and boisterous voyage, the sight of it has given a fresh supply of spirits, and renewal of strength, to make a vigorous push to get into harbour. Nor do I now sit down, by the way of beginning a correspondence so long and so ardently desired by me, (for I shall never think myself fit



fit to enter upon it with an embarrassed mind,) but to request your assistance, as a good and public spirited man, towards carrying a design into execution that may be immediately productive of the best effects to this unhappy country, and in its consequences to Great Britain. The papers which I enclose to you will shew the two points I have in view. The first necessary step to my other undertaking is, to settle the theatre on such a footing, as that it shall require but little of my attention. The new theatre has been built in opposition to me, upon party principles; and if there be not a stop put to it, it will prove a perpetual nurse of feuds and divisions in this unhappy city. They say that Kings have long hands: I am sure corruption has. The great spreaders of corruption are not content with the plenteous harvest which they reap in England: they are sowing the seeds of it here, and in all the British colonies. It is amazing to think how warmly some men of high station in London have

1 2 interested



interested themselves in raising and supporting this new theatre, merely to keep up a factious spirit: they have written many letters, with their own hands, to persons in power here, in favour of the undertaking. There have not been wanting also some good men of high rank, who have written to others in my favour. My Lord Primate is my fast friend; the Speaker of the House of Commons is inclined to serve me, but I have not as yet such a weight of interest with him, as to be sure of his strenuous endeavours in my cause. Now, my good Mr. Richardson, I think it is in your power effectually to secure him to me, and consequently to ensure success. When he was last in England, he received such civilities from the great and worthy Speaker of the English House of Commons, that three lines from him to Mr. Ponsonby would make him exert his utmost influence. A recommendation from Mr. Richardson, of so good a cause, cannot fail of success with so good a man as the Speaker.

Indeed



Indeed the contest is whether virtue or vice, liberty or licentiousness, shall hereafter bear sway in this town. This consideration alone will determine you what part to take; and therefore I shall say nothing of my own interests, or any particular obligation which might be conferred on me. If what I have requested be a proper thing for you to do, I am sure you will do it; if not, I shall never desire any other reason but your not doing it, to be convinced that I ought not to have asked it. I shall only observe, that if any thing is to be done, it should be as speedily as possible, for the Parliament is to meet on the 3d of April, and my petition will be brought in the second or third day after their meeting. The scheme for improvement of education has met with uncommon success, in spite of the most malicious opposition ever known. It is scarce a month since the subscription was opened to support it, and we have already upwards of two hundred names in the list, amongst which there are



forty-eight Members of Parliament. The proceedings of the society are shortly to be published, and I shall do myself the pleasure to transmit them to you. The good Dr. Leland is now employed in making some observations upon them, to silence, if possible, the clamour of the wicked.

I am ever, with the greatest esteem, gratitude and affection,

Your very obliged

and faithful servant,

THOMAS SHERIDAN.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Dublin, April 11, 1758.*

DEAR SIR,

MR. Sheridan had the pleasure of your most kind letters, which the first leisure minute he can get he will answer; mean time accept of his and my most sincere and hearty  
thanks



thanks for your repeated great acts of friendship towards us. Your very warm letter to the Speaker of England he is highly obliged to you for; and thinks it has done him sufficient honour, though it did not gain the full intent of it: the reasons for which are so just, as entirely to satisfy him.

I have not now time to tell you the many embarrassments we are under here. Mr. Sheridan has again been, much against his will, obliged to take up the pen in his own defence; but as his pamphlet will be soon reprinted in London, you will then have an opportunity of seeing the whole conduct of an unoffending man, persecuted by malice in a most extraordinary manner. I now enclose a short view of the proceedings of the Hibernian Society. The remarks at the latter end (which I have marked with a hand) are drawn up by Dr. John Leland, whose eminence, as a writer, you are no stranger to; yet great as this man is, I never so much as heard of him till I went to England. I have



had the pleasure of his acquaintance since my return from thence. Besides his great abilities, he is a man of exemplary life, the Richardson of Dublin, (perhaps not quite so great a genius); and differing from you too in this particular, that he is but little known here except amongst the learned, and a few particulars that he visits.

Mr. Sheridan joins me in love and best wishes to Mrs. Richardson, your dear little amanuensis, and all your family. Many thanks to you for mentioning my child, my two children I should say; but as for my first-born, which you have in your hands, I am so unnatural a parent that I never think of it, and don't care if I never see it.\*

Charles greets you and your's with his best love.

I am, dear Sir,

your's, &c.

FRA. SHERIDAN.

\* The novel of Sidney Bidulph.



CORRESPONDENCE  
OF  
MR. RICHARDSON  
WITH  
LADY BRADSHAIGH,  
UNDER THE NAME OF BELFOUR.

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The correspondence with Lady Bradshaigh began in the following manner:—A lady, calling herself Belfour, wrote to the author of *Clarissa*, after reading the four first volumes, acquainting him that a report prevailed, that *The History of Clarissa* was to end in a most tragical manner, and, expressing her abhorrence of such a catastrophe, begged to be satisfied of the truth by a few lines inserted in the *Whitehall Evening Post*.—Mr. Richardson complied with her request; in consequence of which many letters passed between them, the lady's under her assumed name. Lady Bradshaigh lived at Haigh, in Lincolnshire; but the address she gave was, "To be left at the Post-office in Exeter till called for," and her own letters were dated Exeter.

TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*October 10, 1748.*

I AM pressed, Sir, by a multitude of your admirers, to plead in behalf of your amiable  
Clarissa ;



Clarissa ; having too much reason, from hints given in your four volumes, from a certain advertisement, and from your forbearing to write, after promising all endeavours should be used towards satisfying the discontented ; from all these, I say, I have but too much reason to apprehend a fatal catastrophe. I have heard that some of your advisers, who delight in horror, (detestable wretches!) insisted upon rapes, ruin, and destruction ; others, who feel for the virtuous in distress, (blessings for ever attend them!) pleaded for the contrary. Could you be deaf to these, and comply with those ? Is it possible, that he who has the art to please in softness, in the most natural, easy, humorous, and sensible manner, can resolve to give joy only to the ill-natured reader, and heave the compassionate breast with tears for irremediable woes ? Tears I would choose to shed for virtue in distress ; but still would suffer to flow, in greater abundance, for unexpected turns of happiness, in which, Sir, you excel any other author



thor I ever read! where nature ought to be touched, you make the very soul feel.

Which consideration (amongst many others) will, I hope, induce you not to vary from what has given your good-natured and judicious readers so much pleasure. It is not murder, or any other horrid act, but the preceding distresses, which touch and raise the passions of those, at least, whom an author would wish to please, supposing him to be such a one as I take you to be. Therefore, Sir, after you have brought the divine Clarissa to the very brink of destruction, let me intreat (may I say, insist upon) a turn, that will make your almost despairing readers half mad with joy. I know you cannot help doing it, to give yourself satisfaction; for I pretend to know your heart so well, that you must think it a crime, never to be forgiven, to leave vice triumphant, and virtue depressed.

If you think, by the hints given, that the event is too generally guessed at, and for that



reason think it too late to alter your scheme, I boldly assert—not at all; write a little excuse to the reader, “that you had a design of concluding so and so, but was given to understand it would disappoint so many of your readers, that, upon mature deliberation and advice of friends, you had resolved on the contrary.”

Now, Sir, I must inform you, that I do blush most immoderately, which I rejoice to feel; for I must be mistress of a consummate assurance, in offering to put words in the mouth of the ingenious Mr. Richardson, without a blush of the deepest dye.

I have all this time pleaded only in behalf of Clarissa; but you must know, (though I shall blush again,) that if I was to die for it, I cannot help being fond of Lovelace. A sad dog! why would you make him so wicked, and yet so agreeable? He says, sometime or other he designs being a good man, from which words I have great hopes; and, in excuse for my liking him, I must say, I have made him so, up to my own heart's wish; a  
faultless



faultless husband have I made him, even without danger of a relapse. A foolish rake may die one; but a sensible rake must reform, at least in the hands of a sensible author it ought to be so, and will, I hope.

If you disappoint me, attend to my curse:—May the hatred of all the young, beautiful, and virtuous, for ever be your portion! and may your eyes never behold any thing but age and deformity! may you meet with applause only from envious old maids, surly bachelors, and tyrannical parents! may you be doomed to the company of such! and, after death, may their ugly souls haunt you!

Now make Lovelace and Clarissa unhappy if you dare.

Perhaps you may think all this proceeds from a giddy girl of sixteen; but know I am past my romantic time of life, though young enough to wish two lovers happy in a married state. As I myself am in that class, it makes me still more anxious for the lovely pair. I have common understanding, and middling



middling judgment, for one of my sex, which I tell you for fear you should not find it out; but if you take me for a fool, I do not care a straw. What I have said is without the least vanity, not but modesty would have forbid; but that you only know me by the name of

BELFOUR.

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TO MR RICHARDSON.

DEAR SIR,

LET me intreat! only suppose all the good-natured, compassionate, and distressed on their knees at your feet, can you let them beg in vain?

I have sometimes a faint glimmering of hope, at other times am in despair, which almost makes me mad, and so, Sir, you have reason to think me; but you have given me so great a proof of your good-nature and complaisance, that I depend upon being excused for continuing to trespass upon your time and patience.

I must



I must add, that I am in a house full of company, who are wondering at my frequent retirements; so that I can only now and then snatch half an hour to write what at that time comes into my head. Wonder not, therefore, at the incoherence of this tedious epistle; but write I must, or die, for I can neither eat or sleep till I am disburdened of my load.

That it is to fall upon you, Sir, I am sorry; but through an unlucky necessity it must be so. Had you not favoured me with your's, you never had been troubled with this; and I own it hard you should suffer for your being so infinitely obliging.

I will not say this shall be the last, I hope not; I will flatter myself that I may think a letter of thanks necessary.

The reason of my concealing my name is not for want of confidence in you, but really and truly out of a principle of modesty; for well may I be ashamed to write in the manner I have done!

I have



I have now, Sir, been very grave with you, and must beg pardon for my last airy epistle, in which I took the liberty to use many hard sentences, and even curses; but I hope I shall have reason to turn them into blessings, from the bottom of my heart.

Think not I expect an answer to all this, indeed I do not.

I should be glad if you would order Mr. Rivington just to tell me he has delivered this to you; and, O what I shall feel, when I read—"This day is published, a continuation of The History of Miss Clarissa Harlowe!" I am ashamed to say how much I shall be affected; but be it as it will, I shall ever acknowledge myself,

Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

BELFOUR.

If you should think fit to alter your scheme, I will promise to read your history over, at least once in two years, as long as I live; and my last words are,—*be merciful!*



TO MRS. BELFOUR.

*October 6th, 1748.*

MADAM,

THERE was no need to bespeak my patience, nor any thing but my gratitude, on reading such a letter as you have favoured me with. Indeed, I admire it, and have reason to plume myself upon the interest you take in my story. I should be utterly excusable, in my opinion, if I took not early and grateful notice of it: yet cannot but say, that if there were no other reason but the condescending one you are pleased to mention in the latter part of your letter, to deny me, I should be proud to know to whom I have the honour of addressing myself by pen and ink.

You cannot imagine, how sensibly I am grieved for the pain the unexpected turn of my story has given you. God forbid that any thing unhappy, or disastrous, should  
ever



ever fall to the lot of a lady so generously sensible to the woes of others, as she must be who can thus be affected by a moral tale, tho' the character (however presumed to be in nature) existed not in life.

Indeed you are not *particular* in your wishes for a happy ending, as it is called. Nor can I go thro' some of the scenes myself without being sensibly touched. (Did I not say that I was another Pygmalion?) But yet I had to shew, for example sake, a young lady struggling nobly with the greatest difficulties, and triumphing from the best motives, in the course of distresses, the tenth part of which would have sunk even manly hearts; yet tenderly educated, born to affluence, naturally meek, altho', where an exertion of spirit was necessary, manifesting herself to be a true heroine.

And what, Madam, is the temporary happiness we are so fond of? What the long life we are so apt to covet?

The more irksome these reflections are to  
the



the young, the gay, and the healthy, the more necessary are they to be inculcated.

A verse may find him who a sermon flies,  
And turn delight into a sacrifice.

Of this nature is my design. Religion never was at so low an ebb as at present. And if my work must be supposed of the novel kind, I was willing to try if a religious novel would do good.

And did you not perceive that in the very first letter of Lovelace, all those seeds of wickedness were thick sown, which sprouted up into action afterwards in his character? Pride, revenge, a love of intrigue, plot, contrivance! And who is it that asks, *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?* On this consideration it has been matter of surprise to me, and indeed of some concern, that this character has met with so much favour from the good and virtuous, even as it stands from his two or three first letters; and in some measure convinced me of the necessity



necessity of such a catastrophe as I have made.

Had I drawn my heroine reconciled to relations unworthy of her, nobly resisting the attacks of an intrepid lover, overcoming her persecutors, and baffling the wicked designs formed against her honour; marrying her Lovelace, and that on her own terms; educating properly, and instructing her own children; what, however useful, however pleasing the lesson, had I done more than I had done in Pamela? And it is hoped, that there are many mothers, many wives, who, tho' they have not been called upon to many trials, thus meritoriously employ themselves in their families.

And as to reforming and marrying Lovelace, and the example to be given by it, what but this that follows, would it have been, instead of the amiable one your good nature and humanity point out? "Here," says another Lovelace, "may I pass the flower and prime of my youth, in forming and pursuing the  
the



the most insidious enterprises. As many of the daughters and sisters of worthy families as I can seduce, may I seduce—scores perhaps in different climates; and on their weakness build my profligate notions of the whole sex. I may at last meet with, and attempt, a Clarissa, a lady of peerless virtue. I may try her, vex her, plague and torment her worthy heart. I may fit up all my batteries against her virtue; and if I find her proof against all my machinations, and myself tired with rambling, I may then reward that virtue; I may graciously extend my hand—she may give me hers, and rejoice, and thank heaven for my condescension in her favour. The Almighty, I may suppose, at the same time, to be as ready with his mercy, foregoing his justice on my past crimes, as if my nuptials with this meritorious fair-one were to atone for the numerous distresses and ruins I have occasioned in other families: and all the good-natured, the worthy, the humane part of the world, forgiving me



me too, because I am a handsome and a humorous fellow, will clap their hands with joy, and cry out,

Happy, happy, happy pair!

None but the rake deserves the fair!"

There cannot be a more pernicious notion, than that which is so commonly received, that a reformed rake makes the best husband. This notion it was my intent to combat and expose, as I mentioned so early as in the preface to my first volume. And how could I have answered this end, had I pursued the plan your benevolent heart wishes I had pursued? Indeed, indeed, Madam, reformation is not, cannot, be an easy, a sudden thing, in a man long immersed in vice. The temptation to it, as from sex to sex, so natural; constitution, as in such a character as Lovelace, so promotive; a love of intrigue so predominant; so great a self admirer; so much admired by others; and was it not nature that I proposed to follow?

You suppose me, Madam, to be one who  
can



can believe that there is felicity in marriage. Indeed I honour the state ; I have reason to do so. I have been twice married, and both times happily. But as to Clarissa, whom you wish to be joined to a man of her own re-forming, “ new modelled,” as you say, “ and by her made perfect as herself,” let me say, if I had designed her to shine in the married life, I would have given her a man, whose reflections upon his past life should have sat easier upon him; both for his sake, and for the sake of her pious heart, than those of a wicked man could do, who had been the ruin of many innocents before he became her’s. Great abatements to a well founded happiness surely in these reflections! I would not have confirmed the pernicious notions above-mentioned of the reformed rake.

A man who knows so much of his duty, as he is supposed to know, and who is, nevertheless, wicked upon principle, must be an abandoned man; and even should he reform, an uneasy, and therefore an unhappy one.

But



But why, as I asked in my former, is death painted in such shocking lights, when it is the common lot? If it is become so terrible to human nature, it is time to familiarize it to us. Hence another of my great ends, as I have hinted. “Don’t we lead back,” says Clarissa, on a certain occasion, which had shocked those about her, “a starting steed to the object he is apt to start at, in order to familiarize him to it, and cure his starting?”

Who but the persons concerned should choose for themselves what would make them happy? If Clarissa think not an early death an evil, but on the contrary, after an exemplary preparation, looks upon it as her consummating perfection, who shall grudge it her? who shall punish her with life? *There is no inquisition in the grave, as she quotes, whether we have lived ten or an hundred years; and the day of death is better than the day of our birth.*

With regard to such catastrophes in general as are accounted unhappy, let me refer  
you,



you, Madam, to what an excellent judge, and sound Christian, Mr. Addison I mean, has written in his Spectator. Vol. I. No. 40.

But after all, it is the execution must either condemn or acquit me. I am, however, discouraged and mortified at what you tell me, that you cannot think of accepting of the volumes when completed, if the catastrophe be not as you wish.

I am pained for your apprehended pain, were you to read to the end; and the more so, I own, that I have lost my aim, and judge wrongly from my own heart and eyes, if there are not scenes to come that will affect so tender a heart as yours.

That fifth volume is finished; I will send it directed to Mrs. Belfour, (I must not dare to hope for the honour of a more welcome address) to the Bookseller at . And if you will favour me with a letter upon it—yet you must take care how you favour me too—men are naturally incroachers. And it would be difficult in me to deny myself



the hope of such a correspondent to the end of my life. I love Miss Howe next to Clarissa ; and I see very evidently in your letters that you are the twin-sister of that lady. And indeed I adore your spirit and your earnestness,

And am, Madam,  
with the greatest respect,  
your most sincere admirer  
and humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

SIR,

GIVE me leave to tell you I have been in company with some excellent judges, and had the pleasure to hear them all deliver their opinions in favour of a happy catastrophe, and give much better reasons for it than I can think of.

I am



I am very sensible of all the bad qualities you point out in the character of Lovelace: his villainies are hateful to my thoughts; and I acknowledge your hero deserving of hate, contempt, and every thing that you think he deserves, except the entire loss of Clarissa, and eternal misery: one, I think, must be the consequence of the other. Sure you will think it worth your while to save his soul, Sir. I have many things yet to say in behalf of this *savage*. “Lord!” you cry, “how she loves to excuse this wicked man!” but pray be quiet. You say “you are surprised and concerned that this character should meet with so much favour from the good and virtuous;” but you may assure yourself the good and virtuous are utter enemies to all his wickedness, and are only pleased with the distant view and hopes of his becoming the good, the virtuous, and the tender husband of Clarissa.

I must think, (though in general it is not so,) that a fig may be gathered from this  
K 2 thistle.



thistle. There have been instances of the like.

I would, by choice, have him drawn by easy steps, and as it were insensibly, to reflection; though there are many and great instances of sudden and sincere reformation, of such as have been struck with remorse by various ways. And has not Lovelace sense? And may he not, by the sufferings of Clarissa, occasioned by himself, be brought to reflection with the help of his friend Belford, who seems to be paving the way towards so good an end?

I agree with you in thinking it a pernicious notion, that reformed rakes make the best husbands. In a general way they do not. The unthinking youth of our sex, who marry rakes in hopes of reformation after marriage, make a most dangerous experiment; but if a woman could with justice be convinced of her rake's being sincerely reclaimed before encouragement given, I do not see why she is not excusable, if she ventures  
on



on union with one who has known both good and evil; and has, by unexceptionable motives, been induced to fix to the true point, and that by reflection and choice. A rake, reformed by time, age, or infirmities, generally wants only the power of being what he was; but a sensible man, who reforms in the prime of his days, and apparently from laudable motives, may, I think, be esteemed worthy, and one whom even Clarissa need not be ashamed to accept of, though not at his own appointed time, and by way of favour to her.

The inimitable and pious Mr. Addison is my great favourite. You could not have made choice of a precedent more suitable to my taste; but even that will not do. Why did he not murder his Juba or his Marcia? For I do declare I cannot see the innocent suffer without the most intolerable pain, except I have some notion of their being brought out of their misery by some more pleasing methods than that of leaving the world.



—Terror and commiseration are agreeable enough to the mind, when there is hope of relief; otherwise it leaves the mind in agonies, rather than in a *pleasing anguish*. And when I find all is lost, past redemption, it is not to be imagined how the uneasiness dwells upon me; and must not this give me a distaste to the author? I will not say justly, for I cannot determine that point.

Whether you end happily or not, I have no doubt of your story being well executed, too well for such tender and foolish hearts as mine; for know, Sir, the small parts you have transcribed from the volumes unpublished, have already drawn tears from my eyes; but would you have me weep incessantly? I do assure you, nothing can induce me to read your history through. Do not wonder or take it amiss, for I cannot, indeed I cannot; and it grieves me that I cannot, for well I know it will be worth reading; but I still must hope, that you will not think *such a catastrophe* necessary. May some good  
natured



natured little sylph attend you, and change your gloomy scheme of death, to the more pleasing one of a happy and well spent life.

After your extreme generosity and good breeding shewn to me, I own myself ungrateful for refusing you my name, as I am sure you would not make a bad use of such a confidence. But I would gladly cherish the good opinion you have of me; and must not I forfeit that by shewing you my face, after all I have said! Though, upon my word, I am often confounded with shame, disguised as I am. But you have told me you do not dislike my correspondence, and I act as if I believed you. See what your complaisant encouragement has drawn upon you.

I shall always be, Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

BELFOUR.

P. S. Just as I was sending this to the post, your fifth volume came to my hand; and I



am really quite ashamed of receiving such a favour, as I think myself undeserving of it. I long to read it—and yet I dare not. But I have a kind friend who will first look it over ; though, God knows, he has a heart tender as my own, but is willing to save me pain, though at the expence of suffering it himself. If I find the dreaded horrid act is not perpetrated, I will promise to read it. There is nothing else I fear; and I will hope still, from your good nature, that you may be moved, and alter your fatal and unpleasing design.

“ Go thou ambassador, and bring terms of peace.”

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O, Sir! I have been prevailed upon to read a part of your story, that I thought would have torn my heart in a thousand pieces. You have drawn a villain above nature ; and you make that villain a sensible man, with many good qualities, and you have declared him not an unbeliever. Indeed, Sir, I am more out of conceit with your scheme than ever ;  
it



it must do harm, indeed it must. What will any villain care what becomes of a Clarissa, when he has gained his horrid ends, which you have taught him how to gain? Dear Sir, if it be possible—yet, recall the dreadful sentence; bring it as near as you please, but prevent it. Do, dear Sir, it is too shocking and barbarous a story for publication. I wish I could not think of it. Blot out but one night, and the villainous laudanum, and all may be well again.

I opened my letter to add this, and my hand trembles, for I can scarce hold my pen. I am as mad as the poor injured Clarissa; and am afraid I cannot help hating you, if you alter not your scheme.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

November 20, 1748.

SIR,

I SHALL frighten you with another letter so soon after my last. Methinks I hear you say,—“What! every post! No respite! No quiet! No hopes of being relieved from the persecutions of this troublesome woman!” And if I were really to hear you thus exclaim, I should neither wonder, nor be in the least angry. I am impertinent, rude, tiresome, and every thing you can think of. Do, Sir, abuse me, scold me; though I would rather you would bear with me; for you cannot think how I please myself; and that is what every body is apt to do, though at the expence of other people’s quiet.

This should have gone with my last; but I was afraid of being too late for the post. Here is another scheme, which came into my  
wild



wild head; and, for my life, I could not help transmitting it to paper. Every thought relating to this affair takes possession of me like infatuation; for I am drawn from one thing to another, spite of all resistance.

Suppose Clarissa, after having been brought to the verge of the grave by the ill treatment she has received; suppose she should, by using proper means, assisted by her own divine reflections, and a consciousness of her innocence, so far compose her mind, that she is in a great measure restored to her former state of health, but still steady in her refusal of Lovelace; upon which, he, being overwhelmed with grief, remorse, and self condemnation, is thrown into a dangerous fever, or any other illness, so as to make his life despaired of. At the desire of a dying man, the good Dr. Lewen intreats and prevails with the compassionate Clarissa to make him a visit, as a charitable act. (What an interesting scene might you there introduce!) He endeavours to excite her pity and forgiveness.



ness. She promises him her prayers, and a second visit ; when we will suppose him given over by his physicians, and in all appearance very near his end ; and, after receiving the communion together, as a token of their perfect charity to each other, would the following request be inconsistent with his present circumstances ? That she would condescend, in her great charity and goodness, to suffer Dr. Lewen to join their hands, that he might have the blessing and satisfaction of dying her husband ; which would enable him to bear with greater resignation, the tremendous change just now commencing ; and, as he should think himself united to her spotless soul, he might hope, as a part of it, to be admitted into the awful presence of the great God, whom for some time past he has worshipped with as much zeal, as she once kindly wished him to do. Might not this move her to comply, at least to a promise of marriage in case of his recovery ? From which promise, by proper care and application,



tion, his disorder may take an unexpected turn, and he be restored to life, to health, and to Clarissa. What joy must she feel to have so much good in her power, to perform at her will!

Methinks I see her his wife, or wife elect, kindly attending and administering means for his recovery, (which we will imagine for some time doubtful); he eagerly receiving it, as draughts of life from her hands. This goodness is accompanied with her constant and fervent prayers for the success of such means, which, if they prove effectual, may establish them in mutual and uninterrupted happiness; I see her resentment over, her stifled love returning with double force; with the addition of an esteem for him, to which, from his former demerits, she was before a stranger.

What moving tender scenes could you draw upon such an occasion! and with what pleasure could I sob, and dedicate a deluge of tears to those scenes, and to the worthy objects!

Dear Sir, let us have no more horror, as  
much



much soothing distress as you think proper ; which, I suppose, is what Mr. Addison means by *pleasing anguish*.

I know not whether the above scheme be new or not, but it appears to me very delightful. I said before, I did believe you had a noble one within you ; I wish you would produce it, though sure I am it would make all I have proposed appear like nothing.

You are in love with your image as it is, and you will still be more so, by giving it additional and enlivening graces. A picture, by being touched and retouched by an unskilful hand, might be defaced and spoiled ; but a master must, by each stroke, add a new beauty, and heighten his piece.

Can you be in love, and be pleased with the death of what you love ? It is not in nature ; nor can you be a *perfect Pygmalion* without giving *life* to your image.

Now, Sir, I have done—I think I have, of which I give you joy ; and am,

Your obliged humble servant,

BELFOUR.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

SIR,

I SAID in my last *I thought* I had done, I'm glad I was not positive; but I really have done with my fruitless persuasions, having now no room either for pleasing hope, or for an uncertain expectation. The deadly blow is struck, as Lovelace says, after the most villainous of acts; you now can go no farther; my dear Clarissa is gone!—adieu my joys! and there drops a tear!

Had you been so long expecting a history, which you had set apart for the amusement of your life, and had, like me, been disappointed, would it not have been a vexation to you? O what pleasure I proposed! Now shall I never look on the outside without a sigh, and, I fear, a harsh thought of the author.

I must still think, from your own repeated declarations, that the giving another pain  
must



must sensibly touch you, and am as much amazed as ever at the scenes you have drawn. A tender heart, as you observe, "must be sensible of what would be the most shocking to itself;" but whether such a heart would be able to draw those shocking scenes, is a question.

I have heard, that the most lively delineators of cruelties in paintings, were generally esteemed naturally barbarous. Of this kind, I have been told, was Spaniolet; and another, who crucified a man, that he might the better express the attitude and agonies of our blessed and expiring Saviour. I wish I could forbear thinking of these things, because they make against *you*, at least I think they do.

I have read, and seen performed, all the plays you mention, though not without pain. I own it, in so much, that the known fatal catastrophes have taken away all my joy, and made me incapable of attending to the most interesting and finest passages in them. How often,



often, upon their approach, have I been forced to talk all the ridiculous things I could think of, in order to conceal my weakness ; but all this is nothing in comparison to what I feel for my first favourite, your divine Clarissa ; those were but momentary pains. I am not affected, in the same sensible manner, by distresses in unnatural heroines, as I am when they appear purely in nature. Such come nearer to one's self, and must therefore strike us more forcibly.

I ask you again, Sir, had you suffered her to live a reasonable number of years happily, would she not then have had as good a title to a heavenly crown, as she has at the early years of nineteen ?

We who suffer so much by the early death of those we love, and from whom we expect examples worthy of imitation, may be allowed to call such deaths untimely. How could any one think, with pleasure, of parting with what they dearly love, supposing, as I have said before, their end ever so glorious ?



rious? could you, Sir? Have you ever made it your own case? Though you must have very different notions from those I am possessed with, or you would never have deprived us of our beloved Clarissa. How could you? but I have said abundance on this head to no purpose.

You could, I suppose, have brought instances, of many who had ingloriously thrown away their early time of life, and who, after proper reflection and reformation, have become worthy of being ranked amongst the most deserving; but they must not be remembered, for fear we should say, why may we not expect Lovelace to become one of these.

All the difference between my wishes and your execution is this, you say, "that she has her happy days first, her overclouded last;" which happening so early as in her nineteenth year, was there not time enough, after struggling under that cloud, for the sunshine to have dispersed every gloomy appearance,



pearance, and, as I have often said, given her a shining time again in prosperity? But what you have written, you have written. No wonder she knew happy days before the age of eighteen; trials seldom come till after that time of life.

I did say, I would have had a moral story, that might please in a more general way than I think this will do; and I think it would have been very possible for you to have produced one, and not to have laid one scene either at Vauxhall, Ranelagh, routs, drums, &c.; for out of the five volumes I have read, I would not have wished one alteration, save the one so hateful to my thoughts.

Good Sir, do not provoke me; you sometimes talk as if you thought I had a mind to rob Clarissa of her reward in Heaven, when the only difference between us is, whether she ought to have it now, or after some more years of happiness in this world; indeed I do wish Lovelace to accompany her, after sharing her happiness here: there we do differ greatly.



I allowed, nay desired to see him in all the distresses that the most obdurate heart could wish to involve him in ; but own, that my malice extended no farther than this world.

I cannot agree with you in thinking, that “ had Lovelace reformed, he ought to have sought out one of the wretches whom he had seduced. He could but have done justice to *one* of those ;” and they who are so weak as to be tempted by such an old bait as a promise of marriage, deserve not that justice. I must suppose them an easy prey, though at the same time I abhor the villain who laid the snare. Into your hospital let them go, but I would punish them with a single life ; for *such* it would punish, notwithstanding they might be unhappy in a married state.

Will you not take it amiss, Sir, if I beg you will not send the remainder of your volumes ? Pray think me unworthy of such a favour, though I should be sorry to know you thought so. I cannot promise to read them, but will endeavour. I shall not want  
the



the encouragement of my affectionate partner, who is your sincere admirer, but in my way of thinking as to your catastrophe. As you guess we are happy, you will conclude our hearts are not much unlike. He returns his respects, and is obliged by your favour shewn to me.

I sincerely thank you, Sir, for what you say of Mr. Addison. It is the interest of the whole public, that good writers should be good men. I rejoice in being told by you, that Mr. Addison was an excellent man; and that he lived and died, most remarkably, as a christian, in the true sense of the word. I am the more delighted with these strong assurances, as, I dare say, you have in your thoughts a conversation that, I have heard, passed between Lord Warwick, his son-in-law, a fine youth, but of the Lovelace cast, and Mr. Addison, in the dying hours of the latter, who had sent for the Earl to make him witness of the composure with which a christian could leave this world. I subscribe to all you write upon his play, &c.

I am



I am far from thinking my foolish tenderness ought to be of force against *any* authority. I am humble enough to own my want of power, I have only aimed at moving you by intreaties to compassion; but you were

“Deaf as the winds, and as the rocks unshaken.”

You say it was impossible to be otherwise, and I must try to believe you. Had you told me so at the first, it would have saved you an immense deal of trouble. Do not think yourself obliged to answer this letter, I cannot be so unreasonable as to expect it.

I am glad to hear you had a visit from my dear little sylph; O the poor complying creature! How easily (unlike me) was it sent sobbing away! It ought first to have attended my further orders, they would certainly have been of a more persecuting nature, though I have much reason to think they would not have met with better success. You made a mistake



take as to the two tears, one of joy; they were both of grief, or the sylph was no messenger of mine. You bid it tell me that you are not cruel, but that your Clarissa is a CHRISTIAN. I am trying, Sir, to copy your christian; but find I cannot be quite so perfect a one, though I will venture to say I have as good a meaning.

I asked you in mine, I think of the 17th of last month, "if, after what I had said, I was to be condemned, and for ever out of favour?" No answer to that. Am I, Sir? Must I no longer value myself upon being a daughter of your mind? No; I doubt not; after being accused of indelicacy, want of fortitude, and, as a favourer of libertines, I cannot expect it.

I have been some time *thinking* your history over, and I find I cannot read it. Good Sir, do not send it, do not compel me to be ungrateful. You would not wonder at my inflexibleness, if you knew the joy I had promised myself from a happy catastrophe. I cannot



cannot see my amiable Clarissa die; it will hurt my heart, and *durably*. I know your manner, and I know my weakness—I cannot bear it.

I must stay till towards seventy, it will not be above thirty years; then, perhaps, I may have different notions, and one will be, that I ought not to read any thing of the novel kind, only what are called *good* books; such as Dr. Taylor, the Practice of Piety, or Nelson's Fasts and Festivals. A narrow way of thinking generally attends old age, so I begin to think that I shall never read the fate of your Clarissa.

I am not at all anxious to know what becomes of her wicked relations. I wish they had all been dead ten years ago. I am indifferent now about every character in the book.

I have never given the least hint of what you have favoured me with the knowledge of, except to the one person, whose fidelity I have these seventeen years experienced, and we have no separate secrets.

I must



I must again beg pardon for all the trouble I have given you, and again wish you success in your undertaking; and shall always be ready to acknowledge myself,

Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

BELFOUR.

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TO MRS. BELFOUR.

INDEED, my dear Madam, I could not think of leaving my heroine short of heaven: nor that I should do well if I punished not so premeditated a violation, and thereby made pity on her account, and terror on his,



join to complete my great end, for the sake of *example* and *warning*.

“ You make a wide difference,” you are pleased to tell me, “ between an extreme distress and acts of the utmost horror.” Those acts, Madam, may be called acts of horror by tender spirits, which only ought to be called acts of terror and warning. The catastrophe of Shakespear’s Romeo and Juliet may be truly called *horrid*. Are not these reflections of Juliet, just before she took the opiate which was to lay her asleep till Romeo came to find her among the tombs of her ancestors, as well as the expedient itself, truly horrid ?

—How, if, when I am laid into the tomb,  
I wake before the time that Romeo  
Comes to redeem me ?  
Or, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,  
And madly play with my forefathers’ joints,  
And pluck the mangled Tibault from his shroud ?  
Or in this rage, with some great kinsman’s bone,  
As with a club, dash out my desp’rate brains ?

I hope I have every where avoided all rant,  
horror,



horror, indecent images, inflaming descriptions, even when rake writes to rake. Terror, and fear, and pity, are essentials in a tragic performance.

But, dear good Madam, why should you run away from, or not care to trust yourself with your own humanity, when your choice, or perhaps but your complaisance, led you to be present at the representations of those scenes, which must have been mismanaged, if they did not soften and mend the heart? If warning and example be not meant in public representations, as well as entertainment and diversion, what wretched performances, what mere kill-time amusements must they be to thinking minds!

A good comedy is a fine performance. But how few are there that can be called good? Even those that are tolerable are so mixed with indecent levities (at which footmen have a right to insult, by their roars, their ladies in the boxes), that a modest young creature hardly knows how to bear the offence to her



ears in the representation, joined with the insults given by the eyes of the young fellows she is surrounded by. These indecencies would be unnaturally shocking in tragedy, as every one feels in the tragic comedy more especially. But true tragedy we must not bear.

“How often,” say you (and I repeat your words with concern) “have I been forced to talk all the ridiculous things I could think of, in order to conceal my weakness.” Proud as I should be of the honour of being in your company, I should be sorry to be very near you, Madam, on such occasions, unless I was very indifferent about the representation I went to see.

You say, “that you are not affected in the same sensible manner by distresses in unnatural heroics, as you are when they appear purely in nature; where the distresses come nearer one’s self.” This is exceedingly well said. This was one of the principal reasons of writing the History of Clarissa.

The



The *Orphan*, perhaps, owes its success more to this consideration than to any other. Its characters are all of a private family; tho' in high, yet not in princely life.

As to the questions which you repeatedly urge, whether Mr. Lovelace might not have been made a penitent, &c. &c. all these might have been answered in the affirmative.

But let us suppose the story to end, as you, Madam, would have it; what of extraordinary would there be in it? After infinite trials, difficulties, distresses, and even *disgraces*, (her delicacy and situation considered) see her married: see her an excellent wife, an excellent mistress, and even an excellent mother, struggling thro' very delicate and very painful circumstances, what tho' common, not the less painful and delicate for being common: see her foolish and obstinate relations reconciled to her: see Mr. Lovelace in his behaviour to her all that can be expected from a tender, a fond husband: what is there unusual in all this? except in the



latter case, an example as dangerous as rare! What, in a happiness so common and so private (the lady of equal degree with the gentleman, and of superior, at least equal, talents, so not preferred by the marriage as a recompense for her sufferings) worth troubling the world about?

How many are the infelicities, how many are the drawbacks upon happiness, that attend upon what is even called a happy married life? Indeed the best of our happiness here is but happiness by competition or comparison. A becalmed life is like a becalmed ship. The very happiness to which we are long accustomed becomes like a stagnated water, rather infectious than salutary. *The full stomach loaths the honeycomb.* There are sighs that proceed from fulness as well as from emptiness. If happy in ourselves, it is in the power of our very servants, and so much the more, too often, if they find we endeavour to make them happy, to render us not so. Are not the happiest of us continually



tinually looking forward to what we have not? passing by with thankless indifference what we possess?

But not too severely to moralize. Let us attend Clarissa in the issue of her supposed nuptials. We will imagine her to have repeatedly escaped the perils of child-birth. How many children shall we give her? five, six, seven? How many, Madam? Not less, I hope.

Suppose them then grown up; do they, however well instructed, always or generally answer the cultivators wishes? Will they have nothing of the mortal of a father in them, as he was before his reformation? Even the goddess mother had something to reproach herself with; the consequences of which made her and all her family long unhappy. Will there be nothing of that perverseness, shall I call it? Good parents are not sure they shall have good children. But suppose all their children dutiful, prudent, good; and suppose them to continue so, sons



and daughters, till marriageable years, how then are the cares of the anxious parents increased? If ever so worthy, may not the daughters marry unworthy men, the sons unworthy women? How many discomforts may spring from these sources to make fathers and mothers, however happy in each other, unhappy in their offspring; then probably most unhappy, when least able to contend with misfortunes. And is this, even this not unfavourable view, the condition of life to which we are so solicitous to prefer a creature perfected by sufferings, and already ripened for glory.

If you are dissatisfied with this view, let me beg of you, Madam, (you have a charming imagination, and are yourself happy in the nuptial state, let me beg of you) to describe for Clarissa such a state as you would have wished her to shine in before she went to heaven.

Clarissa has the greatest of triumphs even in this world. The greatest, I will venture  
to



to say, even *in* and *after* the outrage, and *because* of the outrage, that ever woman had.

A writer who follows nature, and pretends to keep the Christian system in his eye, cannot make a heaven in this world for his favourites, or represent this life otherwise than as a state of probation. Clarissa, I once more aver, could not be rewarded in this world. To have given her her reward here, as in a happy marriage, would have been as if a poet had placed his catastrophe in the third act of his play, when the audience were *obliged* to expect two more. What greater moral proof can be given of a world after this, for the rewarding of suffering virtue, and for the punishing of oppressive vice, than the inequalities in the distribution of rewards and punishments here below?

“How can any one,” say you, “think with pleasure of parting with what he loves, supposing his end ever so glorious? Could you, Sir? Have you ever made it your own case?”



Ah, Madam! And do you thus call upon me?—Forgive an interrupting sigh, and allow me a short silence.

\* \* \* \* \*

I told you, Madam, that I have been twice married—both times happily. You will guess so as to my first, when I tell you that I cherish the memory of my lost wife to this hour; and as to the second, when I assure you, that I can do so without derogating from the merits of, or being disallowed by my present, who speaks of her on all occasions as respectfully and as affectionately as I do myself.

By my first wife I had five sons and one daughter; some of them living to be delightful prattlers, with all the appearances of sound health; lovely in their features, and promising as to their minds; and the death of one of them, I doubt, accelerating from grief, that of the otherwise laudably afflicted mother. I have had by my present wife five girls and one boy. I have buried of these the promising boy and one girl. Four girls I  
have



have living, all at present good, very good. Their mother, a true and instructing mother to them.

Thus have I lost six sons (all my sons!) and two daughters, with every one of which, to answer your question, I parted with great regret. Other heavy deprivations of friends, very near, and very dear, have I also suffered. I am very susceptible, I will venture to say, of impressions of this nature. A father, an honest, a worthy father, I lost by the accident of a broken thigh, snapt by a sudden jirk, endeavouring to recover a slip, passing thro' his own yard. Two brothers, very dear to me, I lost abroad. A friend more valuable than most brothers was taken from me. No less than eleven affecting deaths attacked me in two years. My nerves were so affected with these repeated blows, that I have been for seven years past forced, after repeatedly labouring thro' the whole medical process by direction of eminent physicians, to go into a regimen, not a cure to be expected, but



merely as a palliative; and for seven years past have forborn wine, flesh, and fish : and at this time I and my family are in mourning for a good sister, with whom I would not have parted, could I have had my choice. From these affecting dispensations will you not allow me, Madam, to remind an unthinking world, immersed in pleasures, what a life this is, of which they are so fond ? and to endeavour to arm them against the most affecting changes and chances of it ?

The case, therefore, is not what we should like to bear, but what (such is the common lot) we must bear, like it or not. And if we can be prepared by remote instances to support ourselves under real afflictions when it comes to our turn to suffer such, is the attempt an unworthy one ? O that my own last hour, and the last hour of those I love, may be such as that I have drawn for my Clarissa!

I asked you, Madam, at how many years end (endeared by constant good offices) we  
are



are to chuse to part with those we love? “I really cannot tell,” answer you; “but you can tell yourself, that it is impossible to wish for, or be perfectly satisfied at, the time of parting, tho’ this time must come. And have you not observed (proceed you) that, in a general way, the parting sits easier, and makes a less impression upon those in years, than when it happens at an early time, tho’ their esteem and love for each other may not be in the least diminished?”

Indeed, Madam, I have not generally, or at all, observed this, *where the love has been undiminished*, but the contrary. And it is reasonable to suppose that it should be the contrary, and I could easily give more than one instance where the loss of the one partner has, in all appearance, hastened the death of the other.

In the early part of life, youth and gay hopes keep the heart alive. I have compared marriage, even where not unhappy, to a journey in a stage coach, six passengers in it.

Very



Very uneasy sit they at first, tho' they know by the number of places taken what they are to expect; one wishing another to take up less room; the slender entitled, as they think, to grudge the more bulky their very size and shape. But when the vehicle moves on, a hearty jolt or two in a rugged way settles them. Then they begin to open lips and countenances, compare notes, tell stories, assume consequence, and endeavour placidly to keep up to the consequence they assume, and are all of a family. I believe no two ever came together who had not each (however pleased in the main) some little matter they wished to be mended, altered, or yielded up; that had not some few jolts as I may call them. The first six, eight, or ten months, may probably pass in settling each to the other their minds, and what the one or what the other shall or will give up, or insist upon. When this is found out, it ends in a composition, a tacit one at least, and then they settle tolerably together. Then  
love



love (the *intenser*, the *truer* love) increases, if each be satisfied in each other's love: yet a dangerous illness, a fever suppose on the man's side, the parturient circumstances on the woman's, keep hope and fear alive, and the well party will not be able to forbear looking out for *what* is to be chosen (were the dreaded worst to happen, tho' not wishing it should happen) and perhaps for *whom*. But both arrived at the good old age, which you would have had afforded to Clarissa and her reformed Lovelace, their minds weakened, both domesticated, their views narrowed; company principally for each other, and looking not out of themselves, or their own narrow wicket for comfort; must not a parting *then* be very grievous? Bodies may be sundered in youth, may be torn from each other, and other bodies may supply the loss, for the loves of youth have more in them of body than of mind, let lovers fancy what they will: but in age, a separation may be called a separation of souls. Joyless, cold to sense,  
hardly



hardly hope left, no near and dear friend to complain to or be soothed by; yet infirmities daily increasing: relations, as well as others, and with more reason, tho' with less gratitude, than others, ready to jostle the forlorn survivor off the stage of life, and thinking it time for him or her to follow the departed half. In short, human life is not at best so very desirable a thing as we are apt to imagine it to be, had we not a better to hope for. We find this to be true by retrospecting that part of it we have passed over. And shall we call an early death an untimely one, yet not be able to say at how many years end, or in what situation, we should think the inevitable lot happy?

“No wonder (you say) that she knew happy days before eighteen; trials seldom come till after that time of life.” The more useful then my story so full of trials, and these so nobly supported.

“Do not provoke me,” say you. Will you forgive me, Madam, if I own that I really  
have



have so much cruelty in my nature, that I should wish to provoke you now and then, if I knew what would do it, consistent with respect and decency? For, as I have often said, I admire you even in the height of that charming spirit which you exert with so much agreeable warmth, in a cause in which you think it becomes a tender and humane nature to exert itself. The faults which proceed from goodness of heart I love beyond the unwilling virtues of the malevolent.

“Women to be generally thought a trifling part of the creation.” May those who think them so never be blest with a sensible woman! You must see that the tendency of all I have written is to exalt the sex.

You say, “you suppose that I designed my fair readers should find out what was worthy and agreeable in Lovelace.” I did, Madam; and I told you in my first letter that he had some good qualities given him, in compliment to the eye and ear of Clarissa. But little did I think at the time that those  
qualities



qualities would have given women of virtue and honour such a liking to him, as I have found to be the case with many. I thought I had made him too wicked, too intriguing, too revengeful, (and that in his very first letters) for him to obtain the favour and good wishes of any worthy heart of either sex. I tried his character, as it was first drawn, and his last exit, on a young lady of seventeen. She shewed me by her tears at the latter, that he was not very odious to her for his vagaries and inventions. I was surprised; and for fear such a wretch should induce pity, I threw into his character some deeper shades. And as he now stands, I verily think, that had I made him a worse man, he must have been a devil—*for devils believe and tremble.*

“ You cannot agree with me, that Lovelace ought to have done all in his power to repair the wrongs of some one of those whom he had deluded.” The Manse laws are with me in this point. Pity they are not in force throughout the British, and all Christian dominions.



minions. But let me allow with you, that this may depend upon particular circumstances. And yet there are circumstances so particular in some seductions, that a man ought, upon the common principles of honour, whether reformed or not, to marry the woman whom he has betrayed; yea, supposing such to have been an easy prey to him. Perhaps I ought to be excused, by a *lady* at least, if I affirm that no one case can be put where a man's solemn promise should be dispensed with, and he has reaped the fruits of it.

If a woman be very culpably forward and frail, there need be no promise of marriage made her; the man may obtain his end without. Yet multitudes of those very yielding persons would have been virtuous and good women, were they not to have been tempted, stimulated, and betrayed by wretches who have equal title with Lovelace to tempt, to try, to doubt their mistresses virtue.

“ They who are so weak (say you) as to  
be



be tempted by so old a bait as a promise of marriage, deserve not that justice." But if it be justice, and justice surely it is to a poor creature who has risked body, soul, and reputation, upon the credit she gives to the vows of her lover, however inexcusably weak she may be for her affiance in him, she has a title to it. Nor, as it may happen, will she want punishment for her easy folly, were he, who has found her so weak, actually to make good his promise.

"Had *you* been a *reformed* Lovelace (say you) with a Clarissa in your view, would you have done what you say he ought to do?—No, no, no—nor any man living," answer you, with your happy vivacity. What we *would* do, or what we *should* do, Madam, are two very different things. But as circumstances might have offered, perhaps I could not have given a stronger nor a more proper evidence to the world, and even to heaven, of the *sincerity* of my reformation, than by doing this *justice*, I will call it. And were my conscience engaged



engaged (*honour* call it if you please) to effect the delusion, it ought not to have been released, till I had performed the condition upon which it was pledged. And this course I should be the more bound to take, if the poor creature was likely to be finally lost by the consequences of my perfidy. What, think you, has not Mr. Grimes to answer for in the ruin of Constantia Philips, when but eleven years of age, and abandoning her to the town in two months; if the story she tells be true? What ruins, the consequences of *her* ruin, may not be laid at his door?

You will before now have the whole work courting your acceptance and perusal. If it may not have the honour of the latter you must not, however, deny it that of the former. Be pleased in this case to honour the volumes with a place with your Taylor's Living and Dying, with your Practice of Piety, and Nelson's Fasts and Festivals, not as being worthy of such company, but that they may have a chance of being dipt into thirty years hence ;  
for



for I persuade myself, they will not be found utterly unworthy of such a chance, since they appear in the humble guise of novel only by way of accommodation to the manners and taste of an age overwhelmed with luxury, and abandoned to sound and senselessness.

I am, Madam,

with great truth and respect,

your sincere admirer,

and humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*January 6th, 1748-9.*

SIR,

AT last I am got home; the place of all others the most agreeable to me; and now I shall retire to read with attention, would I could say pleasure, the last of your *Clarissa*.

I HAVE,



*Jan. 11th.\**

I HAVE, Sir, with much pain, much greater than you imagine, gone thro' your inimitable piece. I should be ungrateful, not to give it its due praise as far as I am able. It must be allowed by every body a noble work, finely executed, and a design worthy of yourself: may it have the wished-for effect!

I once intended to point out, and take notice, as I went along, of what I thought particular beauties, but they came so thick upon me, that I found it would be an endless piece of work, and believe you will have reason to think my letter much too long, without so doing. Besides, I am conscious I have not strength of judgment for such an undertaking; more especially at present, being every way weakened by reading your most moving relation.

\* Mr. Richardson's last letter not received by the lady.

I verily



I verily believe I have shed a pint of tears, and my heart is still bursting, tho' they cease not to flow at this moment, nor will, I fear, for some time.

Talk not of tragedies, I can now bear any; the deepest pain they give is momentary and trifling, compared with your long-dwelt upon, and well-told story.

It was purely out of gratitude, and to oblige you, I read the three last volumes. I expected to suffer, but not to that degree I have suffered. Had you known me, Sir, your good-nature could not have pressed me to a mortification so great as that I have experienced. But you do not know what a fool I am. What is such a warm constitution good for but to torment me?

Had you seen me, I surely should have moved your pity. When alone, in agonies would I lay down the book, take it up again, walk about the room, let fall a flood of tears, wipe my eyes, read again, perhaps not three lines, throw away the book, crying out, excuse



cuse me, good Mr. Richardson, I cannot go on; it is your fault—you have done more than I can bear; threw myself upon my couch to compose, recollecting my promise (which a thousand times I wished had not been made); again I read, again I acted the same part: sometimes agreeably interrupted by my dear man, who was at that time labouring through the sixth volume with a heart capable of impressions equal to my own, tho' the effects shewn in a more justifiable manner, which I believe may be compared to what Mr. Belford felt when he found the beauteous sufferer in her prison room: "Something rose in my throat, I know not what, which made me guggle as it were for speech."

Seeing me so moved, he begged, for God's sake, I would read no more; kindly threatened to take the book from me, but upon my pleading my promise, suffered me to go on. That promise is now fulfilled, and I am thankful the heavy task is over, tho' the



effects are not. Had it been conducted as I wished, instead of being impatient to get through the sad story, how should I have dwelt with pleasure upon every line, and felt loth to come to the conclusion.

My spirits are strangely seized, my sleep is disturbed; waking in the night, I burst into a passion of crying; so I did at breakfast this morning, and just now again. God be merciful to me—what can it mean? Perhaps, Sir, you may attribute it to violent passions, but indeed, if I know myself, I have none such. It is all weakness, downright foolish weakness. I do assure you, I do not aggravate the uneasiness I labour under, no, nor tell the worst.

To be sure, these effects must wear off in a very little time: I hope so, but I'll tell you what will be a durable concern to me, that I have lost an amusement I had set my heart upon, and that I must lock up such a history from my sight, *never more* to be looked into. I believe I feel just now something of what

Lovelace



Lovelace felt at the death of Clarissa. How it grieves me ! I will suppose it buried with my beloved Clarissa at the feet of her grandfather.

I do not think any thing could hire or engage me to read over again what I have read within these few days. You see, Sir, how unworthily you have bestowed your favours ; I always told you so. It might have been otherwise ; it might have been that some one of the volumes would for my life have adorned my toilet.

Much pleasure have I lost, much pain have I endured. Indeed, Sir, I am afraid I cannot forgive you, not heartily, at least, this great while. You do not think perhaps how I have used you. I have called you all sorts of names, both good and bad, sometimes loving, sometimes hating, tho' at all times admiring.

You will hardly believe what pains I have taken to reconcile myself to the death of Clarissa, and to your catastrophe. I have  
M 2 thought



thought of it hourly, and in as favourable lights as I could put it; for I would fain think as those do who I know to be better judges, but I am so confirmed a *starting horse*, that lead me back ever so often, I can never be familiarized to this object. Somehow or other, my opinion is become so fixed, that (since you cannot convince me) I may venture to say I never can depart from it.

And now what will you say to your ill-judging incognita, when she tells you she is more than ever averse to your catastrophe? To use one of your own expressions, “my whole heart is against it.” And how can I speak words contrary to that? I still think Clarissa should have lived. Miss Howe says, “such a mind was not vested in humanity to be snatched away from us so soon.”

I fancy, Sir, you found yourself remarkably easy as to Lovelace, when you had sent him to destruction, both of body and soul. It seemed to be a favourite point with you. After all, I believe you are of a cruel disposition ;



tion ; just now is one of the times I hate you, and I want to say something still more spiteful. But why should I add venom to my pen? I can plague you enough without that.

The perfectest happiness this world can give I could not (with my notions) give to Clarissa in a single state; because the union of two hearts, in a marriage cemented by pure love upon good principles, constitutes a friendship preferable to all others (not excepting that of Clarissa and Miss Howe) in which the greatest of our earthly joys consists. For which reason would I have changed Lovelace into that man capable of sharing with Clarissa what I call this world's perfect happiness. No other man could she have been happy with: she did love him. Wierly she never could, that she says, and I would rather see her die, than married to a man she could not love.

Had he once reformed, and been a constant partner to this divinity, she would have fixed him hers for ever; I am very sure it must have been so; I see it plainly.



But it is all over. And now I shall fall upon you, for drawing such an irreclaimable monster, and giving such a lover to Clarissa, that her matchless excellence could not have the power to reform. (There I think the glory you designed our sex sinks a little.) Dear soul! she once had set her heart upon it, and who would not have gratified that good heart? Why, you would not. The director of all her fortunes, denied her the enjoyment of all earthly comforts. Barbarous—what shall I call you?—I believe I had best stop here; for why should I say the thing that is not?

The little rubs you speak of, which must happen in a married state, is what, no doubt, every one sometimes has experienced. But what tempers must they be of who make such trifles their lasting unhappiness? The single state has its grievances. And have you not remarked, that discontent, illnature, and envy, appear stronger in the pretended enemies to marriage, than in those who have made it their choice, and have even not been reckoned



reckoned in the happiest class of wives? I do not pretend to affirm this as a general rule; but so it has happened amongst my acquaintance. I have known two or three good-natured old maids in my life, and no more; wives and widows without number. But of all bad things, I think a cross old batchelor is the worst.

If, as you say, the parting after a long and happy life is more grievous than when it happens in our youth, or in the meridian of our days, then might Clarissa have had an opportunity (after being blessed with every thing this world could give her) to have shewn her patience, resignation, and glory, in her dying moments, setting an example, perhaps, to weeping children and grandchildren. How unnatural it may be, I will not pretend to say, but I could with much greater temper part with the dearest friend I have, who had lived to a good old age, than when she happened to be taken off in the prime and flower of her life.



You protest you will not love me, if I prefer Lovelace to Colonel Morden. But will you love me when I protest I do not prefer Lovelace to any man living, as you have finished his character? Not but had he lived to the age of his murderer, I am almost inclined to think he would have been a better man. And had you undertaken his reformation, and married him to Clarissa, we should have seen him an angel. What a pair of angels would you have produced! I must think it would have been an honour to our sex, to have shewn we had the power to change such a devil into an angel. Now we have it not to boast of, which will be the libertines' triumph. Nay, Sir, do not be angry now, for it is not *his* character I am favouring.

I can only say, upon the whole, that I shall ever acknowledge my obligations to you, that I am ashamed of my seeming obstinacy, and that I will endeavour to bring myself to your way of thinking, tho' I dare not promise it.

My



My good wishes attend you, Sir, joined with those and the compliments of my better part, who is your very great admirer, and hopes, with me, that your pen may never cease to amuse you, or give pleasure and instruction to the world, whilst you are able to hold one. Would you but give me a hint of that kind, it is impossible to make you believe what satisfaction it would give to,

Sir,

Your discontented,

but much obliged

humble servant,

BELFOUR.

May I ask, if there is any such painter as Mr. Highmore, or has he any picture in his possession which we are to suppose was taken for Clarissa? If I live, I propose being in town before I am a year older; and I shall long to see the form he has given her. I shall long to see you too, Sir, and perhaps may contrive *that*, tho' unknown to you.



## TO BELFOUR.

NOW, dear Madam, I must take the liberty to say, that I have a great quarrel with you for your severity, more than once expressed to that class of females called *old maids*. That our sex should endeavour to make *such* contemptible, I wonder not; but it is (give me leave to say) a degree of cruelty in a woman to reflect so heavily, and so indiscriminately on those of her own sex, whose misfortune, rather than fault, it would be to be single, were marriages generally happy; but is there such a merit, Madam, in men? I know the Lovelaces of the world think there is. Can——— but I protest I cannot put the question I was going to put. Another, however, I may, to wit: Is it owing to the gentleness of men's conversation softening the tempers of women, or to our tyranny, breaking their spirits, that wives and widows are so much better



ter tempered and sociable, than you suppose old maids to be? If freedom of conversation, in the general world, be pleaded, the maids, thank Heaven! by the assistance of routs, drums, concerts and assemblies, which are every where introduced, bid fair to wipe out the obloquy, not only in the rising, but in the present generation. But if there really be such a difference in tempers, arising from this difference in situation or circumstance, how know we but that it may be owing to disappointment, perhaps to the perfidy of lovers; who, by that perfidy, have freed from reproach some of those who are the first to upbraid the deserted unfortunates, and who otherwise might have been exposed to the same? In this case shall not pity, rather than reproach, be the lot of such, were they really to be angry with the world, and rendered, by its unworthy usage, unsociable in their tempers?

Were it the custom for women to apply, to court, to speak, and without reserve,



something might be said against the good creatures, whom I have always respected for their continence, whether it be a willing or unwilling virtue.

I have heretofore told you, Madam, what unhappy creatures of your sex I would (were I able) build an hospital for; and at the time I thought to have mentioned, that I would have had worthy old maids, of slender or no fortunes, employed as their guardians, sisters, and directresses, in the particular wards of it. And indeed, Madam, I would wish to see, and have often said so, a public and genteel benefaction erected for the support of decayed old maids, of such, in particular, who had never had it in their power to marry with prudence, or who had been perfidiously deserted by our sex, on the score of small fortune, or the like.

There are very few women but would marry at one time or other of their lives, could they with prudence marry; and shall they be punished for their discretion, and that  
prudence,



prudence, which is the merit of the sex!— There is a custom at Rome (where, as you know, celibacy and the single life is a reputation and merit in both sexes), for the pope to portion out (annually, I think,) a number of poor maids. A double portion is allowed to those who decline marriage, and choose the single life; but generally, if I remember right, five sixths of the honest girls, notwithstanding, choose to try their fortunes in the married state. The same choice, I dare say, would the generality of the single women make here, on the like occasion; and shall those be punished with contempt for living single, and that by their own sex, who have not had it in their power to be married? Affectation, ill nature, envy (though the mind may be soured, as I have said, by disappointment and undeserved neglect), are vices, I believe, more particular to the mind, than to the circumstance or situation; and I imagine, that if the single life is to be considered as a punishment, many wives may be found,



found, who have the same qualities in as much perfection, as any old maids in the kingdom, and who ought therefore never to have been married.

Let us not (upon the whole), I repeat, punish poor girls with contempt, for a lot they have not had it in their power to avoid drawing; if we do, we shall have every young girl, perhaps, repining and unhappy as the years go over her head, if she have had not an offer; and ready to run away with the first man that presents himself, in order to avoid the disgrace of living to be an old maid; while not a few of them perhaps, in the same fear, might hasten to help to fill my college for Magdalens, were it erected.—Hard fate! poor girls! to be punished with opprobrium if they slide (the tempter and the temptation ever at hand), and with contempt, if they escape sliding; and if some lordly man look not down in pity upon them!

You propose to me, Madam, for an example



ple of a happy marriage, Sir Thomas Fitz-Osborne and his Cleora; but I will not permit that you (happy in so kind a partner, yourself capable of sentiments so tender, so affectionate, so grateful) should go out of your own knowledge for one.

Mr. Highmore is an eminent painter, in Holborn-row, Lincoln's-inn-fields, the same who published twelve prints of Pamela, of which he has the drawings, and which he had finished before I had the pleasure of knowing him: he has drawn Clarissa at whole length, in the Vandyke taste and dress. He had finished the piece before I saw it, or knew of it, and before Clarissa was printed, having seen only some parts of the work in manuscript. His own imagination was his principal guide; and he has given it great intelligence, sweetness and dignity. As you propose to see it, I will say no more of it. Mr. Highmore has also drawn the assembled Harlowes, the accusing Brother, and the accused Sister, on her return from Miss Howe's,



Howe's, as represented in the beginning of vol. I.

Dr. Chancey, a physician in Austin Friars, a man of learning and politeness, has also a head of Clarissa in crayons; a piece that wants neither spirit nor dignity, nor such an innocence in the aspect, as made me ready, as much as I was on seeing Mr. Highmore's, to curse the Lovelace I had drawn.

But do not, my dear correspondent (still let me call you so) say, that you will see me, *unknown to myself*, when you come to town. Permit me to hope, that you will not be personally a stranger to me then. By the pleasure you do me the honour to own you have in being called "The daughter of my own mind and heart," you must allow me to conjure you, to give me an opportunity to return you, and your dear man, my personal thanks for the trouble, for the sorrow you have had in reading, at my request, three tedious volumes, which otherwise you would not have opened.

I rejoice



I rejoice with you, Madam, on the return of your charming spirits; and wishing they may never fail you,

I am,

your's, &c.

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*October 29th, 1749.*

SIR,

YOU are too complaisant in making an apology for what I should be very unreasonable to expect. It lies upon me to excuse giving you a trouble I have no right to give you; but see, Sir, what it is to indulge me as you have hitherto done.

O Sir! how I regret your want of time! As I lately read the twentieth chapter of Seneca's Morals, I thought of and pitied you,  
and



and every one who is tied to business, and pitied the world for the loss it sustains by your being so constantly engaged. Would it were in my power to take away all your employments but your pen, except what is entertaining and amusing! I am sure, by so doing, I should lay an eternal obligation upon mankind.

I know you take a pleasure in doing good; and pleasure will give you spirits; spirits will give you health; and health will renew an inclination, which at present seems to want spurring; but your “melancholy reflections, from melancholy events, touch me.” I conclude, from hints you have given, that your disorder lies chiefly upon your spirits; and yet, at times, you must have an uncommon flow, to write what you have written.

You are very obliging, Sir, in sending me the Scotch gentleman’s plan, and very humble in asking my opinion of it. I pretend not to judge. No doubt, it would be a very useful work, and, under your direction, a  
very



very instructive one, and I also believe it a necessary work; but I am sure you know it will not answer my wishes.\*

Dear Sir, let the gentleman undertake it himself: he seems very fond of the scheme, and very capable. Your talent may be universal; I believe it is; but you have given so charming a specimen of your excelling in what you have already undertaken, that I must hope you'll go on in the same pleasing path. Your own, your own plan, Sir, is what I want; nor, if you ask my consent, will I ever give it for another.

Whether or no you meant what I thought you did, as to my letters being wild and unconnected, I am very sensible there is sufficient cause to think them so; but I was not angry indeed, Sir,—no, not a little.

You have plainly said, Sir, that both *Clarissa* and *Miss Howe* would have chosen the single state, without limiting any time for

\* The *plan* was something like that of “*The Beauties of History*,” afterwards published.

their



their change ; though I make no manner of doubt, they might have been prevailed upon to alter their minds in time, as very good women have done. I know one who obstinately refused her lover for nine years, and was prevailed upon to alter her condition in the tenth, (no Clarissa neither.) But still you make them declare the single life was their choice, and give me Clarissa's reasons for that choice; which part of her character I was not inattentive to.

You say, they only object to the men. Does not Miss Howe somewhere say to Clarissa, "How happy could you and I live in a single state, if we might be left to ourselves?" or to that effect; by which it seems to be their choice. And indeed she visibly and confessedly marries with reluctance, which no power on earth could have made me do; no, nor yet with indifference.—Strange romantic notions!

And here I cannot help giving you the Spectator's opinion upon a married state, so agreeable to my way of thinking: "I am  
verily



verily persuaded, that whatever is delightful in human life, is to be enjoyed in greater perfection in the married, than in the single condition."—No. 476, vol. vii. I am verily persuaded so too; for which reason I would have married Clarissa.

"I shew a spirit of recrimination!" Why, Sir, can you suppose it is not a pleasure to me, when you find fault after fault, twig upon twig, and lash me with them, though not without mercy; can you suppose, I say, that it is not a pleasure to give you a blow in return, when I think I have it in my power? When I find I am mistaken, I am not above acknowledging it, and asking pardon, as I here do, if ever I returned to the charge, after entirely giving up a point; but I need not tell you, I do not love to give up a point till I am convinced, (do you, Sir?) or that I sometimes think it necessary to leave a hole to creep out of. You know I owned that to you in my last; but did I promise never to do it again? If I did, excuse your incognita

BELFOUR.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

AND must I really believe you, when you say you have five things to commend me for, to one that calls for blame? Dear Sir, take care! I protest you'll ruin me. You know not what a weight I am forced to lay upon my vanity; and am far from being certain that I can keep it from rising to a pitch, unbecoming the character I wish to be distinguished by; but I shall find a few humbling strokes by and by. You judge well, Sir, to tincture your sweet with a little bitter; though you never fail giving me a sugar plumb for the last bit.

You say, Sir, "My supposing how we should appear to each other in an interview, has revived an ardour, which you had with difficulty suppressed." I am sorry for that; for I do assure you, the oftener I think of it, the more terrible it appears. All the im-  
pudent



puident things I have ever wrote, would crowd into my head at that moment; and, brazen as you may think my face, I should shew you a countenance more stupid than saucy. And yet your very obliging invitation (for which I return my grateful thanks) is almost irresistible. “Your honest, your frank-hearted wife.” Those words have given me an idea of a very desirable companion; for I love frank-heartedness, notwithstanding those little deceits I sometimes justify. I think it a happiness, that I can occasion a smile in one whom, I am sure, you delight to see smile. You will do me a favour, Sir, if you will introduce my compliments to your little assembly; to make one in which, would give me real pleasure. An agreeable party at home, or in a friend’s house, is of all things to me the most delightful; and is a pleasure which, at this time, I am so happy as to enjoy.

We are in number seven, of both sexes, free, easy, and innocent: we spend our time in working, reading, and chearful conversation.



tion. Cards are banished, being disagreeable to all; yet want we not amusement. You will suppose by my letter, (which, I find, must be a very long one), that I spend a good deal of time in writing; but as I rise some hours before my company, part of those hours I dedicate to writing.

And here I must inform you, this is another benefit received from your Clarissa; for (I am ashamed to say, that it is a practice of no older a date) you made her early hours appear so charming, that I determined to become in that her imitator, and find numberless conveniencies in it, unknown to me before.

She has also taught me to keep an account of my time; but that, compared with her's, only serves to put me out of conceit with myself. However, it may be useful in putting me in mind of my mis-spent time, and induce me to improve it. If you were to see my diary, how angry you would sometimes be! and how you would laugh at other times, for



for you would find serious and comical promiscuously thrown together. But to have done with this long digression, which your little assembly led me into.

Willing as I should be to add to it, and, had I courage to face you, I know not when I shall have an opportunity; but if ever that does happen, *I will* see you, Sir, if possible. So you might as well tell me what church you go to, and give me some mark to know you by. After that, I shall be better able to judge whether I can dare to face you or not. Do you never walk in the Park, Sir? Because, perhaps, your church countenance may have an air of severity in it, though I am inclined to think the contrary; because an unfeigned piety generally manifests itself in a pleased composure.

You ask me, “if I would choose to refer your knowledge of me to another world?” *If* I was sure of our acquaintance there, I should be very indifferent as to our meeting in this; but if different places are allotted for higher and lower degrees of merit, I am



apprehensive your apartment and mine will be far distant from each other!

I do not rally when I call you the sage Mentor; such I have formed you to myself, and such I must believe you.

If ever I should be inclined to make myself known, I must endeavour to do it with the best grace I can, but shall never design it as a favour; I do assure you, Sir, it can be none. After the trouble and plague I have given you, if you can bear my name, it is all I ought to expect; and if, after that, you can endure the sight of me, and could possibly think it worth your while to take a journey of two hundred miles (two hundred miles it is indeed), you would give infinite pleasure to, and meet with a most friendly reception from two persons, who have great reason to esteem you a very valuable acquaintance. But, Sir, pray do not call me your Devonshire lady! I have very little knowledge of the place, though I have a friend there. *Lancashire*, if you please.

I fancied, Sir, I should raise your curiosity to



to inquire farther into the history of my Magdalen: "a Lovelace in the case?" say you. No, Sir, I shall not make your hero so bad a compliment.

Know then, Sir, this poor unfortunate was born of honest parents, in Cornwall; her father in business, and in good circumstances, brought up his children (two of whom were daughters) very genteelly, and, as is supposed, virtuously. His eldest he married, who, fond of her sister, often took her home with her, by way of companion. Being obliged to go abroad (for how long I know not), she left this poor innocent in the house with her husband, who artfully seduced, and ruined this unhappy, unguarded, unsuspecting child, not yet fifteen years of age!

Can one help thinking, part of that noble speech in Cato applicable in this case:

"Is there not some chosen curse,  
"Some hidden thunder in the stores of Heaven,  
"Big with uncommon wrath, to blast the man  
"Who-----"

void of humanity, inhospitably ensnares, and brutally preys upon injured innocence?



What must the poor miserable wife suffer under such variety of torments?

The shame of the deluded creature was published by the sad effects of her crime. Her unhappy father and family (too justly offended) would shew her no other favour, than placing her in a proper situation, and just affording her sustenance. When she was in a condition to move, she was sent to a friend, at a considerable distance from her home, who, in compassion to her, consented to keep her till a place could be got for her in some good family.

Her own relations behave to her in the cruelest manner, hardly allowing her the common necessaries of life; and had it not been for the compassionate friends whom she has been with some years, she must have been driven to the utmost extremity; but her behaviour is so regular, her penitence seemingly so sincere, and the whole of her life so exemplary, that they look upon her as a truly pious and good christian, and scruple not to make her a companion for their own daughters.

My



My friend, by whose means I became acquainted with her story, would have taken her, had not her misfortune been whispered in the neighbourhood; but she has given her word, and, I know, will take pains to serve her. Meantime she corresponds with her in a most christian and charitable manner; and our hope is to get her placed in some family, where her unhappy story is not likely to be known.

I doubt we shall find some difficulty in fixing her; for it is not every advantageous place that will be proper for her.

What I would choose for her would be, to wait on some pious widow, or good-natured old maid, who keeps one or two sober men servants, and is happily surrounded with all her old favourites.

You know so many good old maids, Sir, that, perhaps, you may accidentally hear of some one, who would not be for having the *dirty impudent baggage sent to Bridewell*.

As you desired, Sir, the particulars of this  
N 3 sorrowful



sorrowful tale, I have given it to you in full; and if it harrows not your soul, I know you not.

Am I ever to be mortified with your unfavourable conclusions? And will you not allow, that I do favour some old maids? You will limit it to one or two. I know I did say so a great while ago, but that was comparatively speaking; but, to make friends with you, I will own, that I know at least half a dozen, and I tell you it is no twig, no salvo.

If I had not thrown away my twigs, I should have a great mind to beat you with them, for ever throwing them in my face; and you are so immoderately grave, upon my free and less serious way of treating this trite subject, that I will here drop it, if you see good. I am unconvertible, and so are you; and yet gravely and seriously, perhaps, we should not differ much in this, any more than in the other disputes now seeming to subsist between us. As to my mother, I told you in my last letter, wherein I thought I  
had



had been to blame, and gave up, from your arguments, many of my own.

There was no occasion for me to go abroad, in search of better examples than I could find at home; and I give up my opinion in that point, with regard to others doing so.

I never accused my mother of any imprudence, unless I may call suspicion so; which, I think, I barely termed a failing, and her only one: she was an excellent woman, I must repeat.

I said, my faults swam upon the surface, as I thought they were but too conspicuous, but sweetly have you turned it to my advantage; and I cheerfully accept of your fatherly proffered assistance, by which I feel myself strengthened, and able to overcome those difficulties in which I had so deeply plunged myself.

I am glad, Sir, you don't find fault with the length of my letters, for I really know not how to make them shorter; and you greatly encourage me by the obliging prefe-



rence you give me as a correspondent. I know not how it is, but when I have concluded, I could begin again.

Instruction may well be your principal view; you have the power, and also the inclination to instruct the ignorant,—I cannot pretend to it. I write to be instructed, and I read, and find I am so.

I will not say I was not to blame, with regard to my father; but I was too young, and too lively, to be fond of one, who had made himself indifferent to me by his cool and awful behaviour. No doubt, but he might have easily gained my affection, had it been his pleasure, though I do believe, and am sure, he was fond of his children; but he took pains to conceal it, for wise reasons I suppose (for wise he was), but I could not then see through those reasons; his being released from a long and painful illness, might make me the less concerned for his death. But I will not take to myself a merit, which, in reality, does not belong to me; for I am afraid  
that



that was but a small consideration with me at the time. But there were those who did not fail of letting me into the secret of my becoming the mistress of a considerable fortune at my father's death, and perhaps that might help to lessen my concern; for I began to have a notion, that a fortune was a very pretty ornament. Though, I can assure you, it was not out of love to money, except for the sake of giving it away, and, perhaps, a childish desire of making a shew; for I ever did, and ever shall despise it, I believe, rather too much. A great fortune I would not be at the trouble of living up to; nor, was it ever so narrow, would I live above it; but I bless God, who has placed me between the extremes, for which I am thankful and contented, and content is the valuable treasure.

But I am going to moralize, and am wandering from my subject, when I should have told you, in answer to what you say of my mother's undoubted concern, she certainly was concerned; but remember I told you,



Sir, my father was a man more to be feared than loved. I believe I ought to thank you for your forbearance of me in relation to my free confessions concerning him. I do thank you, and for your address to parents, to engage the affections of their children. Once I thought I might say for myself, never did I see my dear mother in affliction (whatever might be the cause) that I was not moved in the tenderest manner. What I have said is not by way of excuse, but confession; and, dear Sir, shew your mercy to me. What could you expect from such a girl under twelve years of age? My natural bias you think was bad. Indeed I hope and think that you are mistaken. I am a "better woman than I was a girl." So is every good woman; and I am going to tell you, Sir, (with all my faults) I reckon myself amongst the middling sort, tho' far from the best.

In the next place, you touch again upon my indulgencies to young ladies, as to their appearance in public places. I have said all I  
have



have to say on that subject, only that you and I call things by very different names. Indeed, Sir, you sometimes stretch my meaning, till you tear it in pieces.

If the public diversions are really such prompters of wickedness, I could not suffer a child to appear there at all; but if they may ever be attended with innocence, I still think my indulgence moderate, as I before said.

And you will suffer the pretty fellows to follow the girls to church? You are in that too indulgent; for as they follow, but to look, I am afraid the lusts of the eye will be too strong for the weak efforts of the heart, supposing they might have a small tendency to devotion.

I find I had more to say upon this subject, tho' it is pretty much the same I have said before.

“But with my notions, no wonder that the calamities of *Clarissa*—” And so, Sir, there is a significant inuendo. Truly I have very little notion of outward shew, and



pompous appearances in religion. Decency, with sincerity, I trust will answer all our purposes. I am one who cannot pray seven times a day, or say very long prayers. To tell you the truth, there are very few forms that please me ; they are either made for the wickedest creatures in the world, or so full of vain repetitions, that I am often at a loss to know, whether it is not a fault to express one's praises and adorations in such words. What I want, is a medium between the Pharisee and the Publican, which is seldom to be met with.

The poor girls are obliged to you for your compassion shewn to their composition ; but, brittle as it is, with proper care it may be preserved intire, and I think it preferable to that of the men, lords tho' they are, whom no care, no guardian, no watch can save or keep within bounds. So never wish your girls were boys, Sir—I am sure you do not. You know your own sex so well, that you must be sensible how many hours of repose a good man must  
lose



lose by the change. Fears you may have for girls, but hope and believe your fears will be groundless; but there is a certainty of boys giving at least an equal share of torment.

You allow ladies to be better judges of ladies than you can be. I believe that is a white fib; however, you know us well enough; you know we are fools, for so easily falling into your snares; and you know that you seldom fail to make a tyrannical use of your power; and—just now I hate you all, except one, whose power is ever kept within the bounds of tender affection and good breeding, ever backward to command, expecting no obedience, but what flows from inclination and free-will: both rule and both obey, like the couple at Upton on the Hill.

Now come the sweeteners. I believe I shall be reconciled to you in a moment; for who is proof against self-praise, especially when it issues from good sense and a sincere mind?

But why are you glad I am turned of forty? How can you be so cross, Sir? Do you think  
any



any body loves to grow old? I will tell you my real thoughts upon that head.

I have lately very often put the question to myself, whether I would chuse to live my time over again, if I had it in my power, and it passed in the negative. I am positive I would rather advance than retire, tho' my days have been happy. I have a pleasing view before me, thanks to you, Sir, *Seneca*, the *Spectator*, and the *wise son of Sirach*, which last I have just read, with much greater attention than I ever did before, and think it is the most beautiful and instructive, as well as the most entertaining piece I ever met with in the course of my divine studies.

More raillery!—what shall I do with it? My mother and her sad girl introduced again!

My notions as to thoughtful girls are founded upon experience; and you allow all I insist upon; and that is, whatever a thoughtful girl sets her heart upon, she is more determined upon the execution of it, than the more gay and thoughtless.

But



But give me leave to say, that you carry this matter much too far; for supposing a mother might think her girl rather too grave for her years, must she necessarily advise her to the contrary extreme?

We were three, as I have told you, myself the worst, I frankly own. I was what a fond parent calls a very comical girl; and tho' unlucky (which now and then I did suffer for), yet generally the worst effects I found ended in a laugh at the poor child. Too indulgent to me, I confess it!

I did say I would tell you wherein I endeavoured to deceive you, but I am a little out of humour with you just now; tho' that is no reason for breaking my word. But upon recollection, I find it is but in one instance. And must I give up my only one? If I do, and you should happen to read my letters to any of my acquaintance (which indeed is not very likely) they would presently say, by all circumstances this must be ———. But I will fulfil my promise, tho' not in this letter. I beg leave for a little longer time.



You invite me, Sir, to offend and to provoke you. Fear not but I shall occasionally accept your invitation.

I have read Mrs. Philips's apology, and so far can commend it, as she blames her vile conduct, and sets it forth as a warning to others. She could not do less, and expect any profit from her labours, which, and revenge, I take to be her chief design in writing. I pity her early misfortunes, and abhor the base, ungenerous Grimes, but think it is easy to perceive *bad* inclinations even in her childhood. She endeavours to throw a veil over many blamable actions, which, nevertheless, circumstances make plainly appear as they are. Upon the whole, tho' she have some good qualities, her stamp seems to be that of a downright extravagant kept mistress, any man's property, constant to none; a woman of sense, strong passions, and an uncommon assurance.

As to Tom Jones, I am fatigued with the name, having lately fallen into the company



pany of several young ladies, who had each a Tom Jones in some part of the world, for so they call their favourites; and ladies, you know, are for ever talking of their favourites. Last post I received a letter from a lady, who laments the loss of her Tom Jones; and from another, who was happy in the company of her Tom Jones. In like manner, the gentlemen have their Sophias. A few days ago, in a circle of gentlemen and ladies, who had their Tom Jones's and their Sophias, a friend of mine told me he must shew me his Sophia, the sweetest creature in the world, and immediately produced a Dutch mastiff puppy.

The above was written a fortnight ago, when our agreeable party was interrupted by a crowd of mixed company, who introduced cards, and broke into our happy retired schemes. Keeping later hours at night obliged me to be later in a morning. Now, being reduced to two or three, I have time to resume again, tho' without that, any reasonable



sonable body would have thought this letter long enough.

I am Sir,

your very much obliged,

humble servant,

BELFOUR.

P. S. Before I write to you again, Sir, I shall have a friend in town, whom I dare trust with my letters to you, which for the future you will receive by the penny post. Please to send me your own particular direction, and I need not give Mr. Rivington any farther trouble, for some time at least, but desire yours to me may be sent as usual.

Pray, Sir, give me leave to ask you (I forgot it before) what, in your opinion, is the meaning of the word *sentimental*, so much in vogue amongst the polite, both in town and country? In letters and common conversation, I have asked several who make use of it, and have generally received for answer, it is



is—it is — *sentimental*. Every thing clever and agreeable is comprehended in that word; but am convinced a wrong interpretation is given, because it is impossible every thing clever and agreeable can be so common as this word. I am frequently astonished to hear such a one is a *sentimental* man; we were a *sentimental* party; I have been taking a *sentimental* walk. And that I might be reckoned a little in the fashion, and, as I thought, show them the proper use of the word, about six weeks ago, I declared I had just received a *sentimental* letter. Having often laughed at the word, and found fault with the application of it, and this being the first time I ventured to make use of it, I was loudly congratulated upon the occasion: but I should be glad to know your interpretation of it.



TO MRS. BELFOUR.

YOU are highly obliging to me, dear Madam, in the warm solicitude you so repeatedly express for my resuming my pen with a view to publication, as well as in that regarding my health. The sea-bathing I have not tried; the tar-water I have, and gave it fair play. But as my malady proceeds from repletion, and too much application to business, I imagine the latter not so beneficial as it might be to an emaciated or decaying constitution.

As to my Scottish friend's plan, had I freedom of spirits, or inclination to set about that, and to trouble the world again, I might as well pursue the other, that I once had thought of pursuing. The gentleman is an exceeding worthy, sensible and learned man, and fain would I have obliged him, if I had thought I could execute his scheme to the purpose.



purpose. Indeed I have some degree of pain in refusing or declining to answer the wishes of any one for whom I have something more than an indifference. “Why then, (will you ask) do you not set about obliging me, for whom you express a high value?” —Health! business! Madam. But for what should I set about the work I had once in view?—To draw a good man—a man who needs not repentance, as the world would think! How tame a character? Has not the world shewn me, that it is much better pleased to receive and applaud the character that shews us what we are (little of novelty as one would think there is in that) than what we ought to be? Are there not who think *Clarissa*’s an unnatural character?

I will only say, that when the world is ready to receive writings of a different cast, I hope writers will never be wanting to amuse, as well as instruct. Nor perhaps may the time be very far off. So long as the world will receive, Mr. Fielding will write. Have you  
ever



ever seen a list of his performances? Nothing but a shorter life than I wish him, can hinder him from writing himself out of date. The Pamela, which he abused in his Shamela, taught him how to write to please, tho' his manners are so different. Before his Joseph Andrews (hints and names taken from that story, with a lewd and ungenerous engraftment) the poor man wrote without being read, except when his Pasquins, &c. roused party attention and the legislature at the same time, according to that of Juvenal, which may be thus translated:

Would'st thou be read, or would'st thou bread ensure,  
Dare something worthy *Newgate* or the *Tower*.

In the former of which (removed from inns and alehouses) will some of his next scenes be laid; and perhaps not unusefully; I hope not. But to have done, for the present, with this fashionable author.

“ You know a lady who obstinately refused her lover for nine years, and was prevailed



vailed upon to alter her mind in the tenth."

What was the man? Not agreeable, I doubt, on one hand, and not bold enough on the other; or the lady had more towering views, or a preference to some other man; and not till she found her hopes frustrated, contented herself to take up with the man she had for so long a time despised.

I admire you for what you say of the fierce, fighting Iliad. Scholars, judicious scholars, dared they to speak out, against a prejudice of thousands of years in its favour, I am persuaded would find it possible for Homer to nod, at least. I am afraid this poem, noble as it truly is, has done infinite mischief for a series of ages; since to it, and its copy the Eneid, is owing, in a great measure, the savage spirit that has actuated, from the earliest ages to this time, the fighting fellows, that, worse than lions or tigers, have ravaged the earth, and made it a field of blood.

I am pleased with your principal motives  
of



going to church, example and public prayer; a duty, the one, I have long (shall I say) neglected; a benefit, the other, I have as long been deprived of by my nervous malady, which will not let me appear in a crowd of people. But then I have forborn going to public diversions, and even been forced to deny myself (what I used to be delighted with) opportunities which I had at pleasure, from one branch of my business, to hear the debates of both houses of Parliament. But I will readily come into any proposal you shall make, to answer the purpose of your question; and if you will be so cruel, as to keep yourself still incognito, will acquiesce. I wish you would accept of our invitation, on your coming to town. But three little miles from Hyde-Park Corner. I keep no vehicle—but one should be at yours, and at your dear man's command, as long as you should both honour us with your presence. You shall be only the sister, the cousin, the niece, the what you please, of my incognita, and I will  
never







other, has nothing in it severe or forbidding. Be not therefore afraid, Madam, to challenge my attendance on you, if ever you should be inclined to favour me, as I so earnestly request. I submit to your own conditions or restrictions. I go thro' the Park once or twice a week to my little retirement; but I will for a week together be in it every day three or four hours, at your command, till you tell me you have seen a person who answers to this description, namely, Short; rather plump than emaciated, notwithstanding his complaints: about five foot five inches: fair wig; lightish cloth coat, all black besides: one hand generally in his bosom, the other a cane in it, which he leans upon under the skirts of his coat usually, that it may imperceptibly serve him as a support, when attacked by sudden tremors or startings, and dizziness, which too frequently attack him, but, thank God, not so often as formerly: looking directly foreright, as passers-by would imagine, but observing all that stirs on  
either



either hand of him without moving his short neck; hardly ever turning back: of a light-brown complexion; teeth not yet failing him; smoothish faced, and ruddy cheeked: at sometimes looking to be about sixty-five, at other times much younger: a regular even pace, stealing away ground, rather than seeming to rid it: a gray eye, too often overclouded by mistinesses from the head: by chance lively; very lively it will be, if he have hope of seeing a lady whom he loves and honours: his eye always on the ladies; if they have very large hoops, he looks down and supercilious, and as if he would be thought wise, but perhaps the sillier for that: as he approaches a lady, his eye is never fixed first upon her face, but upon her feet, and thence he raises it up, pretty quickly for a dull eye; and one would think (if we thought him at all worthy of observation) that from her air and (the last beheld) her face, he sets her down in his mind as *so* or *so*, and then passes on to the next object he



meets; only then looking back, if he greatly likes or dislikes, as if he would see if the lady appear to be all of a piece, in the one light or in the other. Are these marks distinct enough, if you are resolved to keep all the advantages you set out with? And from this odd, this grotesque figure, think you, Madam, that you have any thing to apprehend? Any thing that will not rather promote than check your mirth? I dare be bold to say (and allow it too) that you would rather see this figure than any other you ever saw, whenever you should find yourself graver than you wish to be.

And here let me add, that your saying, you shall never intend the revealing of yourself as a favour, shall never hinder me from taking it as a very great one.

I am greatly obliged to you, Madam, for the affecting history you give me of your Magdalen. I pity her with all my soul, and I execrate the inhospitable wretch, who could ensnare and ruin so young a creature; his  
wife's



wife's sister, the daughter of his father and mother by marriage. I remember imperfectly a case of this nature many years ago, happening to a genteel family in the neighbourhood of London. Here the villainous husband ran away with the sister of his wife; kept her privately at different lodgings, by turns, to frustrate pursuit and detection. The unhappy delinquent died in his hands, and unslaked lime was put into her coffin, to destroy her features and flesh, to prevent knowing who she was, were the coffin to be opened. Well I knew, Madam, that there were worse men than Lovelace, villain as he was.

You did say, as you own, that you could tell me wherein you intended to deceive me, if I desired it. I did desire it. And what is your answer? Not such a one as, I dare say, you think yourself I ought to be satisfied with. It is, indeed, such a one as a lady would make to a man whom she had intirely in her power, and who knew not how



to help himself. And is it possible for a lady so excellent to resolve against doing a favour she intends to do with a grace? Yet, notwithstanding this usage,

I am my dear incognita's, &c.

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Dec. 16th, 1749.*

YOU are ever ready, Sir, to acknowledge an obligation upon my strongly soliciting you to resume your pen, yet will you not give me the least satisfaction, not a glimmering of hope. Won't you, Sir? If you did but see with what a suppliant air I ask it, I am sure you could not help giving me this short affirmative answer, I will. Do, dear Sir! How the thoughts raise my spirits!

“ For what should you set about drawing  
a good



a good man? a man who needs no repentance?" Because I believe there never was a fine character drawn without having its admirers (even amongst the most profligate) if not its imitators. And as I know with the good man you would connect the fine gentleman, it might, I hope, be thought worthy of imitation. It is a character we want, I am sorry to say it; but few there are who deserve it. Do but try, Sir, what good you can do this way; and let me have to brag, that I was instrumental in persuading you to it.

The character of Sophia is so very trifling and insipid, that I never heard a dispute about it.

The girls are certainly fond of Tom Jones, as I told you before, and they do not scruple declaring it in the company of your incognita; for, alas! I am no awful body to them; they just say the same before me as if I were but twenty; tho' I give you my word, I never let a faulty word or action pass me without a visible disapprobation; and many



a round battle have I had with them concerning Tom Jones, as soft and as gentle as you seem to think my blame; and you repeat my pretty words with a sort of contempt. Now, if you would only lay a little stronger emphasis upon those words, you would not find them so gentle; at least, I did not mean them to be so; for I designed the condemnation strongly from my heart.

The lady, Sir, who so obstinately and long refused her lover, and married him at last, had better motives for so doing than any you have guessed; the man was not disagreeable, did not want a proper assurance: the lady had not more towering views, or preferred any other man, nor were her hopes frustrated, or ever looked upon him as a wind-fall; and so thoroughly am I acquainted with the lady's mind, that sure I am, she never would have married a man she ever had despised. But when the first overtures were made, she was under sixteen, was a giddy girl, and very sensible that she was so; could not  
fix



fix her thoughts upon any one man above two days together; had a mind to see a little of the world, in order to gain some knowledge how to behave in it; and had, besides, a romantic notion of trying a man's constancy. She did try, she found, and rewarded it, as far as it was in her power to reward it. And I have heard the gentleman confess he thought himself rewarded; and I know nothing can give the lady a pleasure *equally* with hearing that confession.

Well, Sir, since you will persist in finding out excellencies, I must attribute it chiefly to your complaisance, good-nature, and favour to one who looks upon herself as an adopted daughter, and will consider what you tell me as coming from the partiality of a tender father. But why was I adopted? I must give my vanity full play at that thought, or I shall burst. Look you, Sir, vanity was never in the number of my vices, and if you force it upon me, be it unto you, for I declare I will not be answerable for it.



I was a little surprised indeed, Sir, when I read, that going to church was a duty you had long neglected; but the very next line shewed me sufficient reason for that seeming neglect. Call it not neglect, Sir; I doubt not but you made many trials before you gave up what you deem a duty. You have a merit in so strongly recommending it to others; and certain I am, that better do you spend those hours than many who are constant attendants at the public worship, even than the well designing.

Accept the thanks of a grateful heart for your repeated and very kind invitation. That I should with pleasure accept of it, I most sincerely assure you; but, could I remove the reasons I have heretofore given (which I am far from being certain of) the thoughts of taking so long a journey are over for this winter, but I have sent your description to my friend, in which I do not apprehend she will find any thing like a grotesque appearance; her desire to see you is as great as mine; but  
I dare



I dare not trust her with an interview (if my consent be asked) for she is so great a lover of you and your works, that whatever she thought you had a mind to know, she would tell you, to my prejudice, or even to her own. I am not without apprehensions of a discovery, for she assures me she will make it her business to find out your haunts, and if you visit any body that she has but once in her life spoken to, she is determined to throw herself in your way, let what will be the consequence. However, it is not very probable that she will readily find an opportunity; but I am sure she will attend the Park every fine warm day, between the hours of one and two. I do not say this to put you in the least out of your way, or make you stay a moment longer than your business requires; for a walk in the Park is an excuse she uses for her health; and as she designs staying some months in town, if she misses you one day, she may have luck another. I understand, about three weeks ago some business called



her to Salisbury-court, when she could not forbear making you a visit, without doing the greatest violence to her inclination; however, she was checked by apprehending it might lead her to say something I would not have her say; for you must know she is not remarkable for keeping a guard upon her tongue, especially in company she likes. She has, by nature, a frank and open disposition. Perhaps by this she may have seen you, of which I expect an account, and will give it to you. I am sure she will not dare to appear in an immoderate hoop. I am of opinion, should she meet and know you, she will, in surprise, make a full stop, perhaps a courtesy; and should you turn back, it is not unlikely she may ask—is it because you like or dislike, Sir? not knowing at the time that she speaks at all. In surprise or eagerness, she is apt to think aloud; and since you have a mind to see *her*, who has seen the king, I give you the advantage of knowing she is middle-aged, middle-sized, a degree above plump,



plump, brown as an oak wainscot, a good deal of country red in her cheeks; altogether a plain woman, but nothing remarkably forbidding.

I am glad, Sir, that you are reconciled to one unlucky wild girl. My mother, I hope, was so too; for it was the Almighty's goodness to spare her to me till I was turned of thirty, and whatever I now am, I then was. Her tenderness and partiality, I have reason to think, prompted her to a favourable opinion of my actions. We lived together till God thought proper to take her to himself, which thought, tho' pleasing with regard to her happiness, raises in my mind too many affecting circumstances to dwell upon it: only, in haste, I must inform you (for my eyes are brimful) that in the sweet manner of your Clarissa she expired, I may say, in my arms; with this difference, she had not the pain of knowing those she was parting with, or being sensible of their distress, which I looked upon as a providential consideration to her tender nature.

It



It is remarkable, that all her children, being three daughters, who were married and settled at a great distance from each other, were, with their husbands, present at her death, by an accidental meeting; for her warning was short, she being in perfect health and dead in twenty-four hours.

You ask, "had she nothing of cruelty or rigour in her temper." Dear Sir, she was an utter stranger to all tendency that way; all goodness, gentleness, benevolence, and compassion. I told you her only fault, as I then thought it. You have convinced me that fault was more my own than hers. I cannot forgive myself the accusation. Whatever else may occur to your fancy as worthy of blame, put it down to my account; for to gain worlds would not I, to excuse myself, unjustly charge her pious soul.

You, Sir, having acquitted me, as to my childish indifference shewn to my awful father, I look upon myself as certainly excusable, tho' it was once a doubtful point with me.

"See



“ See my diary !” Lord bless you, Sir ! You would then know all my secrets. There you would find your incognita, and all belonging to her. No, no, I cannot indeed, Sir, I am sure you do not expect my consent to this request.

I agree with you, in thinking true religion is the chearfullest thing in the world, and a considerate mind cannot be happy without it. The mind unclogged with guilt must, doubtless, be the lightest, and of consequence, I should think, must shew itself in an easy, happy, and pleasing deportment. Yet some good people have I known, who seem to think solemnity, and even moroseness, as necessary as their devotions. I cannot help condemning these, tho’ at the same time I know they mean well.

But how much more do I blame and pity the young, the gay, the fashionable, I may add, often the agreeable, exulting and priding themselves in the uncertain enjoyments, wherein consists their whole satisfaction.

How



How I always long to admonish and throw in a fashionable obstacle to what they esteem their happiness. Sometimes I have ventured to do so after feeling their pulse, and how do you think I do that, Sir? why I ask them, if they have read *Clarissa*? and if the answer is, as it has been, D—n it, I would not read it thro' to save my life,—I put that youth down as an incurable; but, on the contrary those that approve it, I look upon as hopeful, and proceed accordingly.

Having a pretty extensive acquaintance amongst the youth of both sexes, I have frequent opportunities of making my observations, and having in the number many favourites, I find a succession of pain and pleasure, as their behaviour appears commendable or otherwise. However, I have always this consolation, that there may come a time for reflection, and happy are those who can with pleasure reflect.

I was much pleased with a young gentleman of my acquaintance, who had given me  
hopes



hopes of seeing him several days, but came not. At last he wrote for excuse, "that he was deep in the history of the divine Clarissa, of which he was so fond, and received so much instruction from it, that he was sure I should think him justified for his seeming neglect." Upon which I gave him full absolution, and assured him, that had he changed the conversation of Clarissa for any other, my good opinion of him would have been much weakened.

I must relate to you another trifle, because it pleased me.

A lady was reading to two or three others the seventh volume of Clarissa, whilst her maid curled her hair, and the poor girl let fall such a shower of tears upon her lady's head, that she was forced to send her out of the room to compose herself, asking her what she cried for; she said, to see such goodness and innocence in distress; and a lady followed her out of the room, and gave her a crown for that answer.

But how I run on! Excuse me, Sir, for I  
begin



begin to be so familiar, that I scruple saying nothing that comes in my head. I pity you, but shall have no mercy—a common case!

I had forgot, till you hinted it to me, the just remark you made in Pamela, as to confessions. I have read many of them over, and have been so puzzled, that I knew not what I was guilty of, and what not, till, at last, I threw them all aside, but that most excellent one, in our Common Prayer, in which I hope I have not erred. You will smile, Sir, when I tell you (being taught early to think confession a duty) that finding a paper belonging to a pious christian with her sins marked, I copied it, and confessed them as my own, thinking I did right.

I dare affirm what I told you in my last, as to living my time over again. But mistake me not; I do not wish to die, I am not tired of life; I have a pleasing view before me, and hope to enjoy it some time. I desired Clarissa might live; but that was not denying her this view, quite otherwise; I  
would



would have allowed it her to the end of a long and happy life?

The meditations you design to print, I should be glad to see published; I doubt not of their excellence; and as you say they are connected with the history, it is pity the public should not be obliged with them.

You have been so bountiful in your enumeration of what you favourably term excellencies, that I ought to pass by the few faults you have taken notice of, without endeavouring at a vindication. But so desirous am I of still appearing better in your opinion, that I must try to wipe away a fault, whether successfully or not. That I would have postponed Clarissa's happiness in the next world for the sake of example and instruction in this, I do acknowledge; and that I would have temporarily saved Lovelace, in hopes of his salvation spiritually, I also acknowledge. Query, whether fault the first is to stand as a fault or no fault.

As to fault the second, and what I may have



have said backwards and forwards with regard to old maids, I am very indifferent about it. Methinks I am sorry I have given up the debate, for I seem to want something to play with. That I would have the last word, right or wrong, I acknowledge a fault, which you have generously cancelled.

Well, Sir, and if I did say I would tell you wherein I endeavoured to deceive you, I did not promise it should be in the very next letter; not but there it would have been, only, as I said before, I was out of humour with you, and I hate doing a thing when I would rather let it alone, in which, I presume, I am not particular; nor would you care to read the constrained lines of a guided hand only, a forced communication. However, you have put it down as a fault, and so let it remain. But now, Sir, with all my heart I will tell you, tho' I know I am going to make a declaration, after which I shall not be allowed a judge as to the education and management of son, daughter, or children, in  
any



any shape; for, notwithstanding my presumption in disputing many points with you concerning them, and so often introducing my daughters, know I never was so happy as to have any; happy I say, as it is the common phrase, tho' sincerely I assure you, happier do I think myself without them. I will not say I never wished for them, because I knew it would have added to the felicity of one whose satisfaction is dearer to me than my own; but I bless God (to whose will I cheerfully submit) we are both content, and without anxiety on that account. Such instances do I every day see—fears, cares, and doubts, for the good and well-disposed, and such misery, distraction, and heart-breakings, occasioned by the undutiful and abandoned, that I am not only content but thankful—indeed I am.

I shall not say a word more toward persuading you to read Tom Jones, and beg pardon for having done it; but I meant not to compel; how could you insinuate such a thing?



thing? You really seem not only grave, but angry with me. Had you gone thro' it, your censure or praises would have had agreeable weight with me, as some things I approve, but disapprove many more. I should have been glad to have known how far my opinion corresponded with yours. It was your repeated persuasions that prevailed upon me to read the three last volumes of *Clarissa*; but I did not look upon myself as compelled.

I do assure you, Sir, Mr. Fielding's private character makes him to me appear disagreeable; so I am no ways prejudiced in his favour, I only impartially speak my opinion.

As to my pointing out the moralities which I think may be found in this work, I must beg to be excused; for as you think the piece not worth your perusal, I must think that a research is not worth my trouble, tho' I persist in thinking there are many good things in it.

I believe I may have been more unforgiving



ing to the female than the male delinquents; and it is because I love them better, and their crimes touch me nearer; and that I wish to behave up to the honour, modesty, and virtue, so becoming, and necessary to render them valuable.

Whatever I may have said, it is not that I think better of the men—worse, worse, a thousand times! I assure you, Sir; tho' I am one man's

obliged and faithful servant,

BELFOUR.

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TO MRS. BELFOUR.

*January 9, 1749-50.*

“IF you did but see,” say you, in your favour of the 16th past, now before me, “with what a supplicating air I ask you to resume your pen,” (how condescending! how almost irresistibly condescending!) “I am sure you  
could



could not help giving me the short affirmative answer, I will;" and, in other places, you are equally kind, and equally earnest.

Dear lady! what shall I say? To draw a character that the better half of the world, both as to number and worthiness, I mean the women, would not like; after such a reception too as Mr. Hickman has met with, after such kindness shewn to that of Lovelace—But as I hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing a lady very dear to you, I defer saying more on this subject till then. As that lady seems to be greatly in your secrets, insomuch that there is *but one heart between you*, perhaps I may communicate——

As to the list of Fielding's performances, I have seen at least twenty of them; for none of which, before Joseph Andrews (except for such as were of a party turn), he gained either credit or readers.

I love the lady who so obstinately, as you say, refused her lover, and afterwards married him; and why? Because I think she  
had



had qualities and motives, that incline me to believe she was near of kin, a *sister*, at least, to my incognita. “ You have heard the gentleman own himself rewarded by her in wedlock, for the trouble she gave him, and the trials she put him to in courtship!” I love the gentleman too! ’tis plain he rewarded the lady for her romantic vexation of him : a generous man, I am sure! Rewarded him! a pretty word, now I think of it! A good wife is a blessing, I own ; but could she be better, at the very best, than her own obligations, her plighted faith, required her to be? No supererogatories do I allow of in marriage. Though the gentleman had gratitude to her for proving as good a wife as she ought to be, yet owed he not any thanks to her for either her kindness or generosity to him before-hand. The obligation therefore was on the other side, and he rewarded her. For what? I have said above, for the vexation she had given him in her day. I hope what I have said on this subject, will not abate the

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high pleasure any lady may have on hearing that confession from a husband. You are pleased to say, "you know not a pleasure equal to it." I join with you, with one exception, that no occasion had been given for the reward; and, indeed, there would have been none, had the lady, whoever she was, had penetration and sagacity to discover the good qualities of the gentleman, in any measure proportionable to her love of power; to her tyrannous abuse of it, let me, in plainer words, say.

I wish the but half-excuses you make for this lady's conduct to her gentleman, had been whole ones. Dearly do I love the sex; but I always wish that their principles should be justified by their actions, especially when they have time to deliberate.

For what you say on my next to habitual fault, in not going to the place I nevertheless reverence, I return you my sincere thanks; but by what you say in another place, as well as on the latter subject, you think



think too well of me, indeed you do; I have many faults: only thus far I can say, very, I hope, very few, as to my fellow-creatures.

You date your's, before me, on the 16th of December; I received it not till Saturday, December 30. Perhaps you had rather account for this yourself, than that I should attempt to do it.

And are the thoughts of taking so long a journey really over for the winter? I believe they are, because I believe every thing you say; but if I allow of your reserves, I think I ought not to allow so much for those of your friend. Her desire to see me, as great as you profess your own to be! May be so; but with such a desire, to be in town three weeks; on the 16th of December, to be in sight of my dwelling, and three weeks more to elapse, yet I neither to see nor hear of the lady: it cannot be that she has so strong a desire. She knows your favour for me, and believes that the earnestness she expresses on this head, will be acceptable to you; and yet



that she can excuse herself to you, at any time, by pretending that she is afraid of trusting herself in an interview, lest she should be induced to discover your secret, if pressed so to do; and so only makes believe, as the children say. She cannot have a strong desire, nor even so much as a faint curiosity; and I beg you'll chide her for telling a fib. Yet I don't love to make mischief between friends so very near and dear to one another, as it is evident you two are; nor do I love, you know, that ladies should be guilty of fibs, though they may call them (if put to it) *white ones*; and don't you think, now that I have two teasing ladies instead of one, who may have recourse to them on purpose to vex me, under masques, that I have reason to exclaim against *white fibs*?

Well but, Madam, don't be afraid, or to express myself more properly, desire the lady, your friend, not to be afraid, that I will impertinently endeavour to come at your secret. She may safely meet me. I will ask  
her



her no questions but such as she will lead to, or such as shall be in her own choice to answer; none that will prejudice either you or her. She shall have no need to keep a guard upon her tongue; and yet I shall revere her for the frank and open disposition which you attribute to her, but which, if she has, I fear she has not learnt it of my incognita.

She is resolved, you say, to find out my haunts. No such thing. Dear Madam! again I repeat, this is a naughty lady! she says the thing that is not; my haunts are easily known; she has no mind to see me; she has other and much better engagements. I will tell you some of my haunts, if you please. I sometimes visit ————; I sometimes visit Miss Westcomb, Ormond-street; sometimes Mrs. Jodrell, in Bedford-row; sometimes Miss Highmore; sometimes the wife and sister (two very agreeable women) of Mr. Millar, bookseller, in the Strand. My acquaintance lies chiefly among the ladies; I care not who knows it.



If these are not enow, I will tell you more of my haunts on demand ; but, dear Madam, why is all this necessary, if the lady has such an earnestness to see me as she pretends? I beg you won't believe her. You, Madam, have reasons, founded in the wantonness of power, and from a love of amusing, and perhaps one day of surprising (ladies love surprises) a man with whom you have condescended to hold an anonymous correspondence ; but what reasons can this lady have, with whom I never had the honour to correspond? But she has found me out to be a weak old man, who has a little of the sportiveness and curiosity of his younger days, now and then playing about in his foolish head ; and so she truly, as well as her friend, must be contriving to mortify him for it ; but take care that you do not between you quench—I'll tell you a story, Madam.

There was a time that the consecrated favours of the Pope were held in the highest veneration, and happy was the sovereign prince



prince who could obtain a trifle blessed by him, and sent with solemn parade to him; a consecrated rose, in particular, was thought of more value than a principality. The Elector of Saxony, in Luther's time, even hungered and thirsted for a consecrated rose. His ambassador at Rome was continually, both publicly and privately, soliciting to obtain for his master a consecrated rose, but still solicited in vain: none but emperors and kings, it was declared, were worthy of a favour of so high a nature; and those only to be so honoured on some great, some signal occasion, in which the holysee was equally obliged and benefited. The Elector therefore pined for years, to no purpose, for the supplicated favour. At last, Luther beginning to propagate his doctrines, which struck at the root of the fopperies and impositions of the Court of Rome, both princes and people began to open their eyes, and to see they had been imposed upon.

Luther's doctrines gained ground; the Pope was alarmed; he wanted to get a stop



put to them, and to get the preacher into his hands; and then, in solemn conclave, a consecrated rose was decreed; but then the Elector's ardour, for what once he would have esteemed the highest favour, was abated, and the consecrated rose was looked upon as little more than a common flower.

But now, Madam, shall I tell you what the description you give of your dear whimsical friend put me upon? I had such a desire to see one who had seen the king, that though prevented by indisposition from going to my little retirement on the Saturday that I had the pleasure of your letter, I went into the Park on Sunday (it being a very fine day) in hopes of seeing such a lady as you describe, contenting myself with dining, as I walked, on a sea biscuit which I had put in my pocket; my family at home, all the time, knowing not what was become of me. A Quixotte!

Last Saturday, being a fine warm day, in my way to North-End, I walked backwards and forwards in the Mall till past your  
friend's



friend's time of being there, (she preparing, possibly, for the court, being Twelfth night!) and I again was disappointed.

And now, let me repeatedly tell you, Madam, that I see no reason why your friend, if you——; but I will stifle my resentment for the present; and yet——; but I won't say what I was going to say. She may be of an open, of a frank disposition; to all but to me she also may; but to pretend that she has a favour for me, and for what I have written—no such thing can be. Let me whisper you, Madam, she is only intent on pursuing her own diversions; and yet, as she makes me one of her diversions, I wonder she has not found an hour, in six or seven weeks, to laugh at me.

Should I defer sending this letter, till I had written to every part of your last favour, much more time might be lost, before the lady could be put in the way of amendment; therefore, I break off with the assurance, that I am, with equal truth and respect,

S. RICHARDSON.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*January 28, 1749 1750.*

SIR,

I RECEIVED your letter of four pages and a half, with a Pish-pugh! is this all? There was a time, when I should have thought myself favoured by a few lines; but see what your indulgence has taught me to expect!

You defer saying more, as you hope soon to see a lady very dear to me, when perhaps you may communicate——. What would you communicate? Had you but added something that would answer my wishes, *that* might have proved a bribe, almost irresistible; but whilst you think your incognita ungenerous, surely that is a sufficient reason for her continuing your incognita; for how can she think of making herself known, living under such an odium, in your opinion?

You do not love the lady, Sir, who so obstinately refused her lover, &c. so do not tell  
me



me you do: I think you are very severe upon her, and without the least reason. I told you with what pleasure she heard him own himself rewarded for whatever trouble she might have given him, which was never a desirable, but a mortifying circumstance to her; but you speak of it as a designed trouble, and call what was never ill meant, trials and romantic vexations. How ill-natured! Good Lord, Sir, would you have a woman marry, before she likes one man better than another.

But to answer your question, she did not at all repent of her trifling away those years before she yielded her hand, because she thought herself unfit for such a wife as the gentleman had reason to hope for. I believe most people have some years of folly, and they are better thrown away before marriage than after.

But I hope, Sir, you do not think it was absolutely a courtship of ten years? I should have a very bad opinion of the woman who



would admit of a man's addresses before she had really thoughts of marriage. And this lady, I'm pretty sure, did not think of ever marrying the gentleman at the times she refused him, but at last she altered her mind, as you know very good women have done. No, Sir, she was not ambitious of letting the world see she had a man in her power, or of tormenting or vexing him, whom she never thought unworthy of her esteem; but if, after a refusal, a man will repeat the same question, is a lady blamable for persisting in that refusal, before she is inclined to favour him?

“She could not be better than her own obligations, her plighted faith required her to be,” or, let me add, than her husband deserved she should be. But I'll tell you, Sir, there are many stout men who would condescend to think (though, may be, not to own) themselves rewarded, could they boast of wives who were as good only as they ought to be. However, I do not make even a bad husband



husband an excuse for making a bad wife; and I agree with you in thinking, a wife cannot be too good a one.

“ You do not allow of supererogation in marriage,” nor I neither in the case before us; but were I wife to some men, I should think many acts I now perform with great pleasure, might be deemed acts of supererogation.

The lady, for whom I plead, is willing to allow all obligations, and that no thanks are due to her; yet will she never allow, that she used the gentleman ungenerously, or with unkindness, before marriage. I plainly perceive you are out of humour with me, which is not a very pleasing circumstance.

And will you say I affect reserve, because I have one secret that I am not willing to impart? That I think is hard, after having your repeated leave, nay, request, to keep that secret as long as I thought proper.

There will ever be one great obstacle staring in my face, like a frightful spectre; and  
that



that is, to overcome a modesty, which perhaps you have not found out to be predominant in my nature. But know, Sir, I am so sensible of what I have written, that it must require an uncommon assurance to make myself known, after exposing to you so much weakness and presumption. In short, I have so terrified myself with the thoughts of it, that, at this moment, I tremble, supposing myself before you.

I find you are not willing to allow the reserves of my friend, or that she can have so strong a desire to see you. You will, perhaps, allow both to me. You have declared, that we seem to have but one heart, so you cannot wonder, if we act exactly in the same manner; and since out of the heart the mouth speaketh, we must utter the same words, flowing from the same thoughts; so I shall, from henceforward, speak of me and my friend as one and the same person, and you may suppose that person my identical self; only *suppose*, I say.

Can



Can you with reason think, that I could have the impudence to appoint a meeting, go to your house, or see you any where (being known to you); and come plump upon you with a full face (broad too by nature), and begin talking, as to an indifferent person, with such a multitude of mortifying and confused ideas, as must inevitably crowd into my head in such a situation? No, Sir: I must steal into your acquaintance, if ever I am so fortunate as to obtain it.

Indeed, Sir, I resolved, if ever I came to town, to find out your haunts, if possible, and I have not “said the thing that is not,” nor am at all naughty in this respect; for I give you my word, endeavours have not been wanting. You never go to public places. I knew not where to look for you (without making myself known), except in the Park, which place I have frequented most warm days. Once I fancied I met you: I gave a sort of a fluttering start, and surprised my company; but presently recollected you would not deceive



ceive me, by appearing in a grey, instead of a whitish coat; besides, the cane was wanting, otherwise I might have supposed you in mourning.

To be sure, the Saturday you mention, I was dressing for court, as you supposed, and have never been in the Park upon a Sunday; but you cannot be sure that I have not seen you. How came I to know, that you have a mole upon your left cheek? But not to make myself appear more knowing than I am, I'll tell you, Sir, that I have only seen you in effigy, in company with your Clarissa, at Mr. Highmore's, where I design making you another visit shortly.

You are very good, Sir, in giving me the advantage of knowing so many places where you visit; but, unfortunately, I happen not to have the least acquaintance with any one soul you have mentioned. Mr. Millar, indeed, I did pay a little short visit to, upon a certain occasion, and was frightened out of my wits, for fear of being detected in the  
fact



fact I there committed. A large sheet of paper lying upon the counter, I very dexterously conveyed my parcel under it, and run out of the shop as if I had stole something out of it, rather than left any thing in it, waded across the street up to my ancles in dirt, and got, well pleased (though in a flurry), to my party, who were waiting for me in an adjacent street.

I one day called too at Mr. Rivengton's, and asked him for the Contents to Clarissa. He had it not. Then for a prayer-book. Had not that neither. He seemed very short in his answers. Oh! thought I, friend, if you knew me, perhaps you would ask me to sit down.

Why, Sir, would you tell me the story of the consecrated rose? You told me a story before, to the same effect. I, in all humility, answered, that I never desired you should take the revealing myself as the least favour, and that I thought it impossible it could be so now, after the time that I have plagued you;



you; and you, in return, told me, that what I had said, should not hinder you from taking it as a very great favour. But now, truly, I must take care of quenching your ardour, for fear of being looked upon as the long expected, slighted, consecrated rose.

Now, Sir, I despise all that; for as I never thought myself a rose of any value, I shall not be disappointed or surprised, if, upon proof, you find out my unworthiness. I do not expect or desire to be taken for a rose in June, and to be looked upon as a common flower, is all I can hope for. If that is too much, I'll condescend to be put down a thistle, if you please.

You ask, could not the lady have made the book her pretence? Ah! Sir, you know not what an inclination she had to do so. You know not, that she walked round Salisbury-court; that she had her foot upon your steps, and almost the knocker of your door in her hand; but so it was, when she found that to advance was impossible. In short, her bashfulness



ness would not suffer her, and it drew her back again; and it is not accountable. How would you feel, Sir, only suppose yourself going to appear before one whom you thought had reason to be offended with you; one with whom you had taken liberties, that you were sensible you ought not to have taken; one whom you never spoke to, or saw in your life? Conscious of deserved reproof, with what face could you look upon, or with what words could you address that person? How formidable does it to me appear! Reconcile me to a meeting of this kind, a voluntary meeting, and I will most cordially thank you, and think myself infinitely obliged to you.

What you whispered in my ear, as to my friend's time (meaning mine) being "taken up in the pursuit of pleasures," let me, in return, whisper in your's, and inform you, that writing letters of such length as mine to you, takes up infinitely more of my time, than a meeting now and then could do; and did I not prefer this more rational amusement, to the pleasures you think me so fond of, I should



should not have dedicated so many hours to that, as I have already done; but I think (I'm sorry for you, Sir, but I do think) there is no amusement equal to an improving and an agreeable correspondence.

After all this rant, I seriously and sincerely beg, if I trespass too much, or break in upon your time and business oftener than is suitable to your convenience, that you will freely tell me so; and I assure you I shall not take it in the least amiss, but as a favour. And if, for want of time, or otherwise, you should think it necessary to drop the correspondence, I shall consent without complaint, tho' with regret.

I think I have said a great deal for my friend, and have taken all blame to myself; hope she will not find fault with her representative, nor you with your incognita; who is, with sincerity,

Sir,

your obliged

and faithful humble servant,

BELFOUR.



Whenever there happens to be a fine Saturday, I shall look for you in the Park, that being the day on which I suppose you are called that way.

As you are desirous of finding a nearer way of conveyance, when you favour me with the next, please to direct only to C. L. and enclose it to Miss J. to be left at Mrs. G.'s, &c. &c.

The lady I entrust with your letters, does not know with whom I correspond.

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TO MRS. BELFOUR.

*Feb. 2d, 1749-50.*

WHAT pains does my unkind correspondent take to conceal herself! Lovelace thought himself at liberty to change names without act of parliament. I wish, Madam, that Lovelace—"A sad dog!" said a certain lady



lady once, “ why was he made so wicked, yet so agreeable ? ”

Disappointed and chagrined as I was on Friday night, with the return of my letter, directed to Miss J——, rejected and refused to be taken in at Mrs. G——’s, and with my servant’s bringing me word that the little book I sent on Thursday night, with a note in it, was also rejected; and the porter (whom I have never since seen or heard of, nor of the book) dismissed with an assurance that he must be wrong; my servant being sent from one Mrs. G—— to another Mrs. G—— at Millbank; yet I resolved to try my fortune on Saturday in the Park, in my way to North End. The day indeed, thought I, is not promising; but where so great an earnestness is professed, and the lady possibly by this time made acquainted with the disappointment she has given me, who knows but she will be carried in a chair to the Park, to make me amends, and there reveal herself? Three different chairs at different views  
saw



saw I. My hope therefore not so very much out of the way; but in none of them the lady I wished to see. Up the Mall walked I, down the Mall, and up again, in my way to North End. O this dear Will-o'-wisp, thought I! when nearest, farthest off! Why should I, at this time of life—No bad story, the consecrated rose, say she what she will: and all the spiteful things I could think of, I muttered to myself. And how, Madam, can I banish them from my memory, when I see you so very careful to conceal yourself; when I see you so very apprehensive of my curiosity, and so very little confiding in my generosity? O, Madam! you know me not! you will not know me!

Yesterday, at North End, your billet, apologizing for the disappointment, was given me. Lud! lud! what a giddy appearance, thought I! O that I had half the life, the spirit! Of any thing worth remembering, I could make memorandums.

Shall I say all I thought? I will not. But  
if



if these at last reach your hands, take them as written, as they were, by Friday night, and believe me to be,

Madam,

Your admirer and humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

P. S. I mentioned in a former letter that Dr. Chauncy had a picture drawn of Clarissa. He has been so kind as to lend it to me. Perhaps he will send for it in a few days. You will possibly chuse to send some lady or gentleman of your acquaintance to look at it.

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TO MRS. BELFOUR.

*Feb. 3d, 1749-50.*

I TOLD you, my dear correspondent, that I would take notice very soon of the remaining parts of the letter you favoured me with, which you are pleased to call your long one.

I said



I said, that I hoped soon to see a lady very dear to me, to whom I hinted, that I might communicate—And there I stopped. And why did I stop there? I confess, in plain words, that I stopped in hope, if you really were earnest, that I should begin a new subject, and to have an answer to your solicitation on that head, that you would throw off that veil to me which you had so long worn.

And why did I call my incognita ungenerous? Was it not because you were determined to continue it on, when you yourself, as I told you in a former, had, as it seemed to me, half teasingly, revived an ardour which I had with difficulty suppressed.

You think me very severe upon the lady who so obstinately, for eight or nine years, refused her hand to the gentleman she afterwards married. What, Madam, when I had a hope, by touching this topic with so hard a finger, to find out whether my incognita (whose whole history, and even the minutest parts of it, I should be fond of knowing) were



the delaying lady or not? I am very artful, cunning you call me; but am ready to own my artfulness on demand.

But as this charge of severity seems to be a very serious charge, let me see if I cannot defend myself upon it. You say, "that I shall think that I had not the least reason for my severity, if you can but explain yourself so as to be understood." This is nearly an acquittal for me, since you own, that it is necessary for you to explain, in order to exculpate yourself. I will cite your own words in relation to this matter. In yours of the 29th of October, you say, "I know one who obstinately (obstinately, Madam, is your word) refused her lover for nine years, and was prevailed upon to alter her condition in the tenth; no Clarissa neither," add you. Little then imagining that my incognita was the lady, I made several whimsical and free conjectures as to the lady's reasons for her refusal of so many years. Had she, thought I, any opinion of the matrimonial state, she certainly



certainly lost a great deal of good time, and was either a cross thing or a lover of power, I warrant.

But indeed, Madam, you are mistaken, when you say, that you plainly perceive that I am out of humour with you. I affect to be thought a plain speaker and a plain dealer; but yet I think myself ever under obligation to those who bear with my bluntness; while to those who do not, I owe the less; and contenting myself with my consciousness of meaning well, and not to offend, I take down the dear friend a peg lower than I had raised her, and yet hold myself ready, with joy to lift her up again, as she gives me the wisest reason for it. O that all my friends had been equally free and just with me! I should then have been better entitled than I am to expect that those I treat with freedom would bear my freedoms.

But, dearest Madam, did not (as I have hinted) my ardour to know you revive from yourself? Did you not intimate, that you

Q 2

had



had thoughts of coming to town? In which case, did you not tell me, that you would see me, tho' unknown to myself? What would a lady have thought of a man, whose ardour with so much difficulty before, and till then suppressed, had not made him break thro' all his declarations, and claim a communication so equal, and so just? Did you not raise up another lady, just such a one as yourself, to torment me? Was it not easy, Madam, under this umbrage (as your person or figure was entirely unknown to me) for this lady to have made me the desired visit, as from you? What an advantage would this have given you over me, in being able to laugh in your sleeve at all my simplicities, at my sheepishness, and at all my inquiries, my limited inquiries! For I would rather have led her to say what she pleased, than what I wished, for fear of breaking too rudely into your reserve. I might have guessed, as the subjects of conversation had induced, that the lady before me was you—but only guessed—and  
you



you could have enjoyed my puzzle. Dear lady, don't say that you love not to amuse, that you love not power.

And tell me upon your word, Madam, was it not vexatious, for this supposed lady, whom I had never heard of till within the space of a few weeks, to put on the same shyness that you had thought fit to use; and to endeavour to fill my mouth with moonshine?

Well, thought I, if I know any thing of this circumambaging sex, a pretended slight—And then down went the story of the consecrated rose! It had its effect.

O how causeless, my dear lady, are your fears, your apprehensions, in relation to an interview with me! You have really done me honour, and given me great pleasure, in all that you account freedom with me. The very things I could not praise you for, I have for your lively, your more than agreeable manner, loved you for. I cannot bear that you should make use of such hard words,



speaking of yourself, as you so liberally use.

And have you been in the Park often? Three times have I been there, besides the times I mentioned to you. O that to-morrow may be a fine day! And have you been at Mr. R——'s? He, not to ask you to sit down!—He to speak short to you!—I wish some unaccountable consciousness was not upon him; if so, his rusticity might be owing to confusion of heart, not knowing the reason for his own absence of mind. And have you been in Salisbury-Court? upon the very steps leading to my door—the knocker in your hand? Unaccountable causeless diffidence! “But a brick-wall perhaps,” says Clarissa, “between Mr. Lovelace and me!”—So near me, my incognita! I was ready to go to the steps, and to look round me there, when I read this passage, tho’ at so many weeks distance, as if I had thought, that so welcome a foot had left some impressions on the stone, that might correspond with those  
you



you have in my mind. Good old soul! you will be apt to say, what ideas hadst thou in thy youth, that can have left so much force upon thee in thy decline!

And must you steal the first interview?—Dear good lady—And will you favour me with one? And is not this shyness founded in wantonness of power? in a love of amusing? in a fondness for surprising? “Reconcile you to a voluntary meeting, and you will most cordially thank me!” Are these your own words? and are you in earnest? Nothing but my thanks, my praises, my gratitude, would you think yourself entitled to, did you but know my heart. And yet, on the meeting so much longed for by me, you will find a weak creature, unable to express half his pleasure, and more sheepish than you can be bashful.—What reason then for diffidence?

That I did not promise to take further notice of your last, when I had time, was owing partly to little spite, and partly to va-



nity, in the hope that you would think me considerable enough to take the silence as you do take it. But sorry I am, that it gave to a lady so meriting, a lowering sensibility. Answer your letters! How can I forbear, if I would? I have too much pleasure in the correspondence to wish it any other ending, as I have heretofore repeatedly told you, than with my life.

I wish, Madam, you would tell me, that it lies upon me to name a place of interview. My wife admires you. She is a good woman. She is also a bashful woman, and but of few words. Why not at Mr. Highmore's? He told me—but I won't tell you what he told me.

Consider, dear lady, how long you have been in town; and yet never have done me the desired favour. The sun shines out.—I wish it were not with too faint and moonlike glimmers, to promise much for to-morrow. But the eligible of eligibles would be at my own house in town, or at North End. Do,  
dear



dear lady, name some day, some happy hour.  
You shall be your friend, yourself, what you  
please, with

Your truly affectionate, faithful,  
and obliged humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Feb. 7.*

SIR,

THE little billet I sent you to apologize for the neglect that has given you so much trouble, was written in too much hurry, to express half my concern ; you know not the pain it has given me. “ A giddy appearance,” you may well say. But it is not quite so much so with regard to my own conduct in this affair, as you may imagine.

I have not time at present, Sir, to take further notice of your letters, only that I am excessively obliged to you for them.

Q 5

Having



Having a pretty large acquaintance amongst a set of young people, I am obliged to go more into company than I really like. Perhaps you may think otherwise; but I often go out to oblige other people, when my inclinations and whole heart are at home; and one or two days in a week I generally shut myself up, without giving admittance to any one. Perhaps you would be surprised to see, at the close of many days in my diary, "this day read four, five, six hours." To be continually in a hurry, and in company, would be, to me, a continual distraction. However, I am too much engaged, especially this week; for when I have been at Merope on Friday, and at the fair on Saturday, I shall have spent these six days without a retired hour. However, I will account for that: cards I never touch, nor will I, while I stay in town, except to write a message. Sad outcries against me! Unfashionable, unsociable, &c. &c. But all that I despise.

As to the interview you so kindly desire,  
it



it must come of itself, I believe ; for I cannot appoint a meeting ; nor can I accept of your obliging invitation. Come to your house ! Dear Sir, you do think me impudent then ? If we were to meet, you would not see the same person you correspond with. Not ten words should I speak. I can write freely, but cannot talk, till I fancy myself well acquainted ; and upon this occasion, I should appear worse than ordinary, because I should think it necessary to talk.

What could Mr. Highmore tell you, I wonder ? Had he any fancies concerning me ? or does he expect to see me again ? So many people call upon him, that I think it would puzzle him to find me out amongst the multitude. He can indeed express thoughts very well : but then he must have the object to study, or a lively description of it. I cannot help taking notice, that he is the most obliging, civil man I ever met with in his way. It is almost a shame to give him any trouble ; and yet I intend it very soon.



But I am writing a long letter, when I only designed acknowledging the receipt of your last favour, and assuring you that

I am, Sir,

Your very much obliged,  
and faithful humble servant,

BELFOUR.

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TO MRS. BELFOUR.

*Feb. 8, 1749-50.*

YOU are pleased to tell me, Madam, that you often go out to oblige other people, when your inclinations and whole heart are at home! Often did you say, Madam, with deliberation say?

I am, Madam,

your most obedient servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

TO



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*February 9, 1749-50.*

O GOOD GOD, SIR!

NOW am I in a worse situation than ever; the occasion of it well known to you before this reach you.

It is needless to say, I was yesterday at Mr. Highmore's, where, from the hints I had given, I hoped a little, but feared much, to see you, but did not expect an attack, from another person, on your behalf. Could it be imagined, that I would refuse to you what I would grant to another, in an affair that regarded you only? Indeed I think it was wrong judged, though, I believe, with a friendly intention, and, I am sure, with the greatest good manners, and I dare say, nothing was meant but to oblige; but I am not pleased that you, Sir, was not the first to whom I revealed myself, though this was not a voluntary revelation.

But,



But, Lord, Sir! when I was particularly desired to walk into the next room, I was more than half dead; but revived a little when I found I was only making a curtsey to your picture, for I verily thought I should find you there in person.

Mr. Highmore began in very civil terms; and I answered—God knows what! for I felt like an idiot. He said something of meeting you at his house, which I absolutely refused; and upon his pressing to carry some message, I desired it might be, “that I could not yet conquer myself so far as to see you,” and that is the truth.

But, Sir, at this time, the devil forsook me; no evasion, no white fib, or the least falsehood could I utter. Why could not I say, “Sir, you are mistaken, I am not the person you take me for,” and have persisted to the last? But that would have been an ugly black lie, a thing I never am guilty of; and, alas! my little deceits are all over, when I come face to face.

When first I went to Mr. Highmore’s, I  
could



could not help saying, I knew the picture of the Harlowe family; and, I remember, he seemed pleased, and said, I must be very well acquainted with the history. This was carried to you; and it was not unnatural to suppose it must be your correspondent that so readily guessed at the picture, having had a hint of it from you. Blockhead that I was! But how did I know at that time, that Mr. Highmore was an intimate of your's, or that he had seen my letters? Well——It signifies nothing, asking ridiculous questions, for what is done, cannot be undone.

Mr. Highmore did not say he knew my name, though I make no doubt of it. And now, Sir, I am so very poor, that I have not even that favour (as you term it, though none I should have thought it) to bestow; but I have one to ask, and that is, if it is not too late, that you will promise me, and engage Mr. Highmore (or whoever may be in the secret), never to make your correspondent public; for though I glory in it myself, and  
have



have with pride confessed it to some select friends, yet, I know, by the ill-judging and the envious, I should be thought conceited, and too self sufficient, in corresponding with one so far my superior in understanding, and an author.

I cannot positively bring myself to a voluntary meeting yet, notwithstanding what you have said; so, good Sir, do not press it. It seems as if I was beginning a new correspondence, and I know not how to proceed. I am not sure whether I should answer your last letter, or not. Please to let me know your mind as to that; for I am, in a word, confounded, surprized, disconcerted; but still,

Sir,

your obliged and faithful

(O! that I could say)

INCOGNITA.

I suppose it will not be necessary to give Miss J. any further trouble. Please to direct to me in New Bond-street.

TO



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Feb. 9.*

SIR,

THO' I sent you a letter this morning, I cannot help asking you the meaning of the three lines—the three cruel lines I have just received. My spirits were sunk sufficiently with what had happened yesterday, and I am now overwhelmed with your severe reprimand. Shall I tell you (being in bad spirits) it even drew tears from me.

“Do I go out often?” Ye—yes, Sir, I do go out often; which I confess, with a meek and humble spirit. If it is a great fault, pray make me sensible of it, for I did not know that I acted blameably, till you gave me to understand it.

I am just going to the tragedy of Merope, and am in excellent crying order; and

Your obliged humble servant,

BELFOUR.



TO MRS. BELFOUR.

*Saturday, Feb. 10, 1749-50.*

DEAR MADAM,

THOUGH extremely hurried, being to call at several places in my way to North End, I should not excuse myself, if I did not write a few lines on the contents of your two last billets; the first brought me two hours ago, the last just now.

I have neither seen nor heard from any of Mr. H.'s family since last Monday, I think it was, that I was there with a young Cambridge gentleman, who had a desire to see Mr. H.'s Clarissa, &c. could not therefore know what passed yesterday. Your letters (I am sorry the occasion has been so afflicting to you) gave me the first, and all the information I had, or have of it.

Yet, to this hour, do I not know your name. Mr. H. (to own the truth) had been guessing it to begin with a B. At a venture, therefore,



therefore, in a farrago of nonsense, which you have possibly received by this time, I supposed it so; if it should not, thought I, my incognita will smile in her safety, and at my puzzle. If it should, does she not deserve to be alarmed? Miss Howe tells Clarissa, that whoever affects secrets, excites curiosity.

In this spirit, though I own with design to amuse, and a little to vex you, by sly and saucy hints and intimations, was my last written, as you will perceive.

But how, Madam, could you think me capable of so much impertinence, (I admire at your patience with me, if you could think me so very rude) as to blame you for being often abroad? I thought I could not be mistaken to mean (and it was all I meant), by my really spiteful three lines, that I thought it a little unkind to make such difficulty of favouring me, when you declared to me, that you often went out to oblige other people, when your inclinations and whole heart were at home.

As



As I do not indeed know your name, having not heard a syllable of what passed at Mr. H.'s but by your letters of last night, this day received, I am obliged to trouble your Miss J. with this. You might possibly be displeased more with yourself, and perhaps with one or two who may suffer by your anger, if I should tell you how Mr. H. came to guess at the letter B. and at the quality of your dear man, on which I founded my foolish scene in my last, on purpose, as I said, to amuse, perplex, and vex you, as you had done me.

It is yet, you will see, in your power to oblige me greatly, by a thorough revealment, which I entirely submit to your own pleasure and manner.

I am, Madam,

with great respect,

your admirer and humble servant,

S. RICHARDSON.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Feb. 14th.*

SIR,

MISS Jackson gave me your two letters yesterday in the beautiful circle at Ranelagh, which place I never before had seen, and which I think a very delightful scene to the eye.

I own I have no notion how Mr. Highmore could guess at the first letter of my name without guessing at the whole, or that he should not impart to you the whole in the space of three days. And pray which of you guessed that George began with a B? You are, I must own, adepts at guessing! I could have wished Mr. Highmore had wanted curiosity, and that the discovery had been left to my own manner and time, which you so obligingly consented to. But, since it is over, I must make the best of it. That is ever my way through every circumstance in life.

Now, Sir, the advantage is greatly on your side. I stand now exposed, after having  
done



done many things which I can no way excuse myself for, but that they were acted behind the curtain.

As to our meeting, I cannot yet think of it. I must rest a little after my hurry of spirits, especially as you are now indifferent about it; and that I must look upon myself as no better than the slighted consecrated rose.

I must, in the first place, have a look at you at a distance. After that, who knows but I may pluck up my courage, and desire your company in New Bond-street?

I will try my fortune in the Park again next Saturday, at half an hour past one, if the day prove favourable. From one to two did I walk there last Saturday without success; but then you were in the height of your spite. At two o'clock, I said to myself, Worse than the consecrated rose! Sighed; walked away fatigued, rather dejected; got into my coach, drove home; dressed; dined; went to the play; talked all the time, to avoid seeing good Queen Elizabeth murdered along with her unhappy favourite; sat  
with



with impatience to see the ridiculous Fair ; came home, and went to bed, dissatisfied with the past day.

And now, Sir, for the present, I will release you ; and am

Your obliged servant,

D. BRADSHAIGH.

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TO LADY BRADSHAIGH.

*Feb. 15, 1749-50.*

MADAM,

I DID not really or certainly know your ladyship's name on the 10th instant. I will give you all that passed, as nearly as I can recollect, between Mr. Highmore and myself, from the time of your first visit to his pictures, down to last Sunday evening.

On a visit I made to that gentleman, when only himself, his wife (a prudent and worthy person) and his daughter (one of my particular favourites) were present ; I verily believe,



lieve, said he, that I have seen your Lancashire lady.

I asked him his reasons for thinking so. Now you must know, Madam, and you will easily believe it, that Mr. Highmore is a much more lively person, and of consequence more curious than I am; and I believe it is very usual for ingenious painters, when persons whom they know not make a visit to their works, and who are attended by their own equipages, and appear of figure or rank, to be desirous to know to whom they are indebted for the favour done them. Be this as it may, servants, as Lovelace observes, are instantly familiar, and John, the servant of Mr. Highmore, enquired of your Ladyship's servants, whom they had the honour to serve. They told him. But he being a Frenchman, so reported the name, and his master so little could depend upon his accent, that he could only be sure that the gentleman was Sir Roger somebody, with a B. You may believe, Madam, that I enquired after the person of a lady whose mind

I so



I so dearly loved, and after that of a gentleman, whom that lady had made so happy, supposing Mr. Highmore to be right in his conjecture. The gentleman, he told me, appeared to be very much a gentleman; was dressed plain: they came in a landau. But John, as I presume, being no herald, or man at arms, nothing was pretended to be collected from the coach door.

Greater attention seemed to be expected from John next time you came; for hopes were given of another visit. But Mr. Highmore was induced to think himself right, by the servant telling John that Sir Roger was of Lancashire; that he had not long been in town; that he had not been in London before, I think was said, for some years: by the readiness with which your ladyship talked over the history of Clarissa; pointing out the persons designed by Mr. Highmore; and by something that was said on my picture. I forgot to tell your ladyship in its place, what Mr. Highmore said as to your person. You



were of a good stature, he told me, rather plump than otherwise ; lively ; good humoured, he dared to say ; great politeness between you and the gentleman, yet great ease and unaffectedness ; sound health promised by your complexion, and looking as a lady accustomed to reside in the country.

It was after this that I received the letter in which your ladyship describes the person of your friend : and this description tallying with Mr. Highmore's of his visitor, I was enabled to be the cunning man you call me. God help me, Madam, I was so poor a soul, that, without this clue, you might have gone on with your deceptions and puzzlings to the end of the chapter.

Mr. Highmore told me, that a promise of another visit was made, against which he was to take out the historical paintings of Pamela ; and he asked me whether, if he had time to give me previous notice of the visitor's coming, I would chuse to be there, as if by accident. By no means, I said. I thought  
my



my correspondent was by much too studious of concealment: but that, if this were the lady, she should take her own way. But this, if he pleased, he might do—ask his daughter or his wife, as if undesignedly, when it was Mr. Richardson was there? and whether he had said when they should see him again? And on these questions, observe if the lady shewed any emotion, which might put it out of doubt that she was my incognita. But, Madam, I could not dream, that Mr. Highmore would attack you upon it, as the identical lady. And your intermediate letters shewing you so studiously resolved to continue the disguise (changing the name of one lady, throwing out distances of place, on purpose to obscure and extinguish all probable lights that might lead to a discovery) I was vexed, and determined to fall upon other measures; a vast deal of spite and revenge in my heart (so much, that I did not know how I came by it);—out then came the quenching menace, the story of the consecrated rose.



I have written thus far thro' several interruptions, and know not whether this tediously circumstantial account is clear and satisfactory. No white fib have I intended to pass upon your ladyship. The discovery has not given me the pleasure I should have had, if it had been made in your own way, and by yourself. Mr. Highmore saw it did not. I told him that I was as much disconcerted as the lady could be, tho', equally with her, assured of his obliging intentions. But he was vexed, I saw, and said, he wished he had not acted as he did. I reminded him of what I had told him the Monday night before, that I would only wish something of my name to be thrown out, in hopes to alarm and give the lady some emotion, by which to be more certain.

But Mr. Highmore has charming spirits. Fine spirits, your ladyship knows, are not to be always restrained, tho' excellent all the time may be the intention. While such a but half-a-live soul as I am, have only left the  
flashes



flashes of a curiosity, that, like an expiring taper, makes an effort or two and then goes out.

Upon the whole, your ladyship will see, that on the 10th (last Saturday) I knew not really your name; but that I did know it from Mr. Highmore on Sunday night.

But let me beg of you, Madam, that you will not suffer the accident that has been so very disturbing to you to restrain that charming vivacity and spirit, with which I have ever been delighted. I am no more known now to your ladyship than I was before, and can only profess myself at this distance,

Your ladyship's, &c.

S. RICHARDSON.



TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Feb. 21, 1749-50.*

YOU will think it odd, Sir, but by being better known, I seem to myself a greater stranger to you; and am, for the first time, at a loss what to say in answer to yours—but something I must say.

As to the discovery, I must repeat, I wish it had not been made; but believe, with you, the intention was good. You, Sir, with great good-nature and politeness, judged it best not to meet me, for which I thank you. I was that day particularly unfit for such a trial, being in a flutter, and trembled all the time I was in Mr. Highmore's house, and indeed the whole day after. Perhaps the earthquake affected me; tho' I was not sensible of the shock when it happened. I acquit you, Sir, as to the white fib, and beg pardon for my



my suspicion, which, however, I had reasonable appearances for.

Mr. Highmore was very partial in his description of me, thinking to please one, who, I flatter myself, had conceived favourable notions of me. I have lived long enough to be acquainted with my own person, and can think of what I was, what I am, and what (if I live) I must be, with great indifference.

Well, Sir, my curiosity is satisfied as to the distant view. I passed you four times last Saturday in the Park; knew you by your own description, at least three hundred yards off, walking in the Park between the trees and the Mall; and had an opportunity of surveying you unobserved, your eyes being engaged amongst the multitude, looking, as I knew, for a certain gill-o'-th'-wisp, who, I have a notion, escaped being known by you, tho' not your notice, for you looked at me every time we passed; but I put on so unconcerned a countenance, that I am almost sure I deceived you. Tell me, Sir, if I am



mistaken. I must own to you, that I was terribly apprehensive of finding something in your person stern and awful—but quite the contrary. Nothing appeared but what I told Mr. Highmore I saw in your picture, together with a mildness and good-nature, which bid me banish fear, and venture to see you. And yet—O that this first meeting was over!

Shall I tell you, Sir, what it puts me in mind of? When I was very young, I had a mind to bathe in a cold bath. When I came to the edge, I tried it first with one hand, then with the other. In the same manner my feet; drew them back again; ventured to my ankles; still drew back. But having a strong inclination to go farther (being very sure I should like it, was the first shock over) I at last took a resolution, and plunged at once over head and ears; and, as I imagined, was delighted; so that I only repented I had not before found courage to execute what gave me so much pleasure.

Last



Last Friday business called Sir R. into the city, whither Miss Jackson and I accompanied him. As we crossed the end of Salisbury-court, it was proposed to turn a certain imaginary scene into reality. The coach being ordered to turn, I screamed so, that you might have heard me, and pulled the check-string with such violence, that I believe the coachman's thumb suffered a good deal; for all which I was laughed at, and made believe they were only in joke.

After Sir Roger had finished his business in Cheapside, we strolled into St. Paul's, where, after taking a view of the noble dome, I went to sit in the vestry, whilst Sir Roger and Miss Jackson walked up to the whispering gallery.

Sitting there all alone, and being, by the solemnity of the place, thrown into reflection, and my thoughts rather elevated, I, in a kind of zeal, cast up my eyes, and what should I see in the centre of the roof, but a great staring rose! So, thought I, this must  
be



be a consecrated rose ! And I fancied it looked down with contempt upon its insignificant sister, in her more humble situation. My thoughts, which just before were elevated, now fell suddenly, with my eyes, and I sneaked out of the room, like one that is affronted, and dare not make it known. Who could have thought that any thing in your letters should have produced so much mortification to me in St. Paul's church ?

After this I walked into the choir.

I am, Sir,

Your obliged and

faithful humble servant,

DOROTHY BRADSHAIGH.

TO



TO LADY BRADSHAIGH.

*Wednesday night, Feb. 21, 1749-50.*

AND so, Madam, your curiosity is satisfied as to the distant view !

But was no regard at all, after what had passed, to be paid to mine ?

Could I have imagined, that hating a croud, a gay croud especially, it was expected that I should walk up and down the Mall, exposing myself, as I may say, to the observation of a lady whom I had never had the honour to see, when she was determined not to give me the least sign or token so much as to guess at her by ?

Indeed, Madam, I expected an interview, a sensible interview, were it to have been but for five minutes.

I was very much indisposed all Friday night, and all Saturday. Yet this hope kept  
me



me in some spirits. A young lady, and my second daughter, were to accompany me to North End. That umbrage might not be given you, it was agreed that they should make two visits by the way, the last at Whitehall, and then go and wait for me, as I would for them, at such distance in the Park, as should not be in sight of any lady who might approach me.

I walked up and down, as you observe, the path between the trees and the Mall, my eyes indeed engaged amongst the multitude, looking for a certain gill-o'-th'-wisp, whom not seeing, or any body who by her looks (as I had hoped she would) gave me the least intimation of herself (for I imagined not, that it was either in your ladyship's intention, as I said, or in your power, to put on such an unconcerned countenance, and on purpose to deceive me). Yet, she cannot be come, thought I—nor yet—nor yet—And so continued walking, expecting, and sometimes fretting, till the Mall was vacant of ladies. I gave  
this



this lady an honest description of myself, thought I—And after the young lady and my daughter then walked I, extremely tired and fatigued, and joined them on the upper part of Constitution Hill; made my five miles at least nine; the sauntering four fatiguing me twice as much as the five. I was so ill, that tho' I had very agreeable company there, I was obliged to retire some hours sooner than otherwise I should have chosen. Am now but indifferent.

Till the moment that I had the honour of yours of this morning, your ladyship will judge what were my thoughts upon the occasion. Shall I mention some of them? Surely, thought I, could not Lady B. have had some mercy on a crazy creature, who was pacing on the verge of the Mall (as of life) conscious of an unfitness to mingle with the gay company in it? If she be here, me she must see. Why, if she has seen me, will she not shorten the time of my penance? for a penance she must know it to be to me to walk



walk here. She knows I cannot bear a croud. My eye staggers under the view of gay people always in motion, and in the same motion ! Now casting my dull, my tired eye in every face, yet without hope of finding the sought-for object, unless by signs and tokens given by reciprocal lookings out. And can there be a finer day, even in summer, than this ? Is it not the day of her own choice ? Then, poor Miss Collyer, thought I—My poor Patty ! Dear girls ! how will you be tired as well as I ! How shall we all drag, by-and-by, four miles more ? Aloof I saw them once or twice, at even dutiful, because desired, distance. Could she not have sent some one in pity to tell me, that a certain person, whom I seemed to be looking out for, had seen enough of me, and that I might contentedly pursue my course to North End ? Lord ! Lord ! what a figure I make ! At this time of life too ! And I have been in high dudgeon ever since. And thus much for this night—between eleven and twelve—not re-  
turning



turning home till nine, when I met with your acceptable favour of this morning.

*Thursday morning, Feb. 22.*

FOUR times to pass me in the Park! yet see me at more than three hundred yards distance, and know me by my own description? You must be a cruel lady! You have indeed the advantage over me in being able to put on such an unconcerned countenance, with an intention to deceive; the more cruel after the discovery of name and quality too; my conduct from the beginning free, open, sincere.

To-morrow afternoon I intend to get to North End, and there stay till Sunday evening. My habitation there is but a few paces from Hammersmith turnpike. If your ladyship could prevail on yourself, and upon those whom you equally love and honour, to accept of a homely repast there, either Saturday or Sunday, you would make very happy  
a man



a man to whom you owe some joy for the pain you have given him ; and who is, with great truth,

Your ladyship's most obedient servant,

S. RICHARDSON.

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TO MR. RICHARDSON.

*Feb. 24, 1749-50.*

NOW, Sir, do not I know whether to be very humble or very angry. To be sure I ought to have given you some hint, that I had satisfied my curiosity, since I might suppose, as you came there with that obliging intent, you would stay till you had received some such hint.

Will you forgive me ? Indeed I was innocent as to intention. You know, Sir, I have always had a desire to see you, without being known



known to you; and I thought you so understood me, when I desired to meet you in the Park; and I cannot think myself to blame in any thing regarding that appointment, but that I did not take some method of letting you know I had seen you; for my business there was to see and not to be seen. You had a description of me from Mr. Highmore, and an honest one from myself. You gave me your own, by which I knew you, and you had a chance for guessing at me. I remember I told you, if I was surprised, I perhaps might courtesy, not knowing I did so; and in the same manner speak, if you turned back, &c. But I knew you at so great a distance, that I was not at all surprised when you came near to me, nor did you turn back; for that I observed. So I looked at you, and talked all the while to Miss Jackson with great composure, and did not so much as give her the least hint that I had seen you. The good Baronet was not there.

As to the discovery, I had a little scheme



of my own, known to nobody, which perhaps might have produced a meeting before this time, and we might at this hour have been old acquaintance; instead of which we are quarrelling, and saying all the spiteful things we can think of.

And now, dear Sir, all animosity apart; Sir Roger joins with me in returning sincere thanks for your obliging invitation, which we should take pleasure in accepting, if it was not for what I am going to tell you. It is now a determined point, that if I live, and have health and eyesight, I will see you. And it is also determined, that (with your consent) it shall be in New Bond-street. The sooner you give me that pleasure, the sooner shall I have an opportunity of assuring you in person how much I am, Sir,

Your obliged and

faithful humble servant,

D. BRADSHAIGH.

I hope, Sir, you are not very bad after  
your





your fatigue; you looked very well yesterday morning. But I dare not tell you how near I was to you.

N. B. The meeting between the two Correspondents did not take place till some time in March.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.



your fingers; you looked very well; certainly  
nothing. But I dare not tell you how much  
I was to you.

It was the evening between the two Correspondents  
did not stay there till some time in March.

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Richardson, Samuel, 1689-1761

The correspondence of Samuel Richardson selected from the original manuscripts, bequeated by him to his family to which are prefixed a biographical account of that author and observations on his writings ; in six volumes

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